

Golden Sun: Mystery Of Jupiter

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Summary: The battle between Zealot and Zeros is finally underway. Both Adepts are strong, but who will win?
(interactive fic)

***Chapter 1*: Bio**

They deleted my story, sad. Anyway, first chapter is already up, because one reviewer sent his characters over using e-mail (very clever). It's still not too late to enter a character. But this time, please e-mail them to me.

This is what I want to know;

Name;

Age;

Gender (I forgot this one last time);

Appearance (what do you look like?);

Clothes;

Weapon (not too many please);

Element (*one* of Venus, Jupiter, Mars or Mercury)

Place of birth;

Place you live;

Character (how you act among people);

You're a **good guy/bad guy/wanderer**

Would you help Babi? Why (not)?

Thank you for your cooperation, and let's continue the story.
And I still need a map!

Milaya Milen Zeal (svaneijs@hotmail.com)

***Chapter 2*: Prologue: A Vanishing Star**

Prologue; A Vanishing Star

It was midsummer, and the town of Vale was at peace for 60 whole years, ever since the Elemental Stars had been returned. Isaac, Garet, Ivan, Jenna, Felix, Picardo, Sheba, Mia and Alex had each grown old, but most of them had died, a few years back.

Sol Sanctum was even heavier guarded than 60 years ago, so that no one, and I mean *no one*, could enter the Sanctum. Day and night, the Sanctum was guarded, every entrance and exit was being checked, making it impossible for anyone to enter the Sanctum. Everyone was so sure that the Sanctum was safe again for the Elemental Stars.

How very wrong they were.

"HYAAAAAA!!!!" an 18-year-old said when he used Move on a stone pillar, much like Garet had done before he, Isaac, Jenna and Kraden had entered Sol Sanctum.

Only difference, was that this boy watched to where he moved the pillar.

He was 6'1, had short, scruffy brown hair, green eyes, broad shoulders, and a muscular build, with a handsome face to finish it. He wore a brown tunic, leather belt, beige pants, and a green cape, which was his favorite attire.

A tad annoyed, he blew a strand of hair from his eyes, and smiled at his work. He hadn't been all *that* good with Psynergy, but he was definitely improving. He couldn't believe that there had been a time in his life, which had been 12 years ago, that he didn't have the slightest clue of how to use Psynergy. He'd been studying Psynergy since his sixth birthday, and he was an expert at healing and attacking.

However...

He gazed up, toward the giant mountain. What he really wanted, was to explore Sol Sanctum. But Sol Sanctum was so well guarded, that there was no way to get in. He'd probably be able to go in there, when Hell freezes over! He sighed. What he wouldn't give to see what it was like on the inside of that Sanctum.

"Hey Brett!!" a very familiar voice shouted, and he turned back to see his good friend Eve running toward him.

Eve was dressed in a light blue robe with dark blue wavy designs on the front and sleeves. She was 5'8, had long dark blue hair, dark black eyes, was medium build, and was very pretty. Well, in everyone else's opinion. To Brett, she was absolutely gorgeous. Brett had had a crush on Eve since even before he started to really like girls. Eve was a trained healer, but could do some damage as well. He gulped nervously as she stopped near him.

"Uh... hi Eve," he said nervously.

"Brett, someone's come to the village! And he's so weird, come on!" Eve said, and began pulling Brett to the plaza, where the café was located.

They arrived 10 minutes later, and calmly entered. It was pretty crowded, but they easily spotted a cloaked person, sitting in the dark, alone, studying an ancient scroll. That thing looked ready to fall apart, but he carefully rolled it up and placed it back in his pouch, just as someone came over and brought the man a drink. He nodded, and tossed the man a small bag of gold coins.

Brett blinked, twice, and looked at Eve.

"I wonder who he is," Eve muttered.

"Yeah, so do I," Brett mumbled.

The two quietly walked over to the man, who only sipped his drink, but didn't make a move to look at them.

"Err-hem," Eve said, and the man looked up. "May we sit here?" she asked.

The man made a gesture with his hand to show they were allowed to, and the two sat down.

"Sorry for asking, but why are you here?" Brett asked.

The man sighed and just tapped his throat softly. Eve gasped.

"Y-y-you're mute?! " she asked, and the man nodded.

Brett looked shocked, but then grabbed a parchment from his pouch, along with a pencil, and gave it to the man. The man gave a slight smile, before writing something on the parchment and handing it back.

I had always wanted to see this town it said in answer to Brett's question.

"Ah," Eve said. "So, what do you think of Vale?"

It's very different from any other town I've staid in, but I like exploring.

"You're a wanderer?" Brett asked, and the man nodded.

"So, have you visited the Sanctum yet?" Eve asked.

Not yet, where can I find the Sanctum?

"Mount Aleph, that's that one over there," Brett said, and pointed out a window toward Mount Aleph.

The man turned around to look at Mount Aleph, and a secret smile past his face, before it was gone. Eve didn't notice the man smiling, but Brett did.

'Hmmm... something's not right here,' he thought.

I better go to the Sanctum then, maybe I'll see you later, the man wrote, before getting up, grabbing his pouch, and leaving.

The duo looked at each other oddly, but didn't think anything of it, for now. They left the café to catch up to the man... but he was gone! Something was definitely wrong here.

As fast as they could, they went to the Sanctum, but, when they got there 30 minutes of running later, they gasped in horror. Thirty of the guards that had been guarding Sol Sanctum were lying on the ground, bloodied, and injured badly. Brett's eyes were wide with horror, because he knew full too well who did this.

"Eve, did you bring your weapon?" he asked.

Eve brought out a Magic Wand and said: "Sure did!"

Brett unsheathed his sword. "Good, because we'll need them."

They ran inside as fast as their legs could carry them, up the steps, and into the Sanctum. The walls were wonderfully decorated with the most beautiful drawings they'd ever seen, but they now had more important matters to deal with. They came to a room with bricks standing out into a pool of water.

"Whoa," Eve uttered. "Now what??"

Brett studied the situation, and placed a hand on his chin in thought. After awhile, he took a few steps back before taking a jump at the closest brick.

He nearly toppled over, but he regained his balance.

Brett turned to Eve and said: "We have to jump over! Let's go!"

Carefully, the two jumped across the bricks to the other side. There was a staircase there, which they ascended quickly.

They came to a long hall, and they continued to run down the long hall, jumping over dead bodies of the weirdest creatures they'd ever seen every once and awhile. Each creature had been killed with one slash of something sharp. Eve paled at the sight, and decided to try and ignore them, which wasn't easy. Brett however, barely noticed.

The duo continued, until they reached another room with those bricks, only this time, there were three passages at the end.

"I've read about this," Eve said. "The door is in the left one, so, let's go!"

Brett nodded, and they began to jump toward the left passageway. The door at the end was still open, so they quickly ran through. They ran down the hallway, following the trail of dead creatures.

There were a lot of statues in the next room, but they immediately, noticed where that man had gone. The statue to the far right had been moved out of the way to reveal a door. The duo hopped over the small stream, and entered the door. They continued to run down the hall, on and on, until...

"Brett! Look!" Eve said ecstatically as she ran over.

She stood on the symbol of Luna, and smiled.

"This is SO cool!!" she said.

Brett wasn't looking at the symbol on the floor. No, he was looking at the portal on the wall. He'd heard about that portal. It went to... oh no!

"He's after the Elemental Stars!!" Brett said, and when Eve looked at the portal, she gasped.

"Oh no!" she squeaked.

They quickly stepped in.

Brett and Eve landed softly, and were a little confused. Where was that guy? They looked around. They saw the Mars Star, still shining brightly, meaning it hadn't been

touched. The Mercury Star hadn't been removed either. Nor has the Venus Star moved.

"OUT OF THE WAY!!" a stern voice shouted, and Brett and Eve jumped.

They looked over, and noticed that guy standing not far away from the Jupiter Star, but somebody was blocking the way. The person that blocked him the way, was a silver-haired woman, who had her hair tied atop her head in a messy ponytail, dressed in rags, with pale skin, and an axe strapped across her back. She refused to move.

"I said MOVE!!!" the man hollered, but the woman shook her head harshly, her hair whipping about her face. "Fine! Looks like I'll have to this the hard way!"

The man raised his hand, which became surrounded by Psynergy.

"Eep!" Eve said. "Brett! We have to do something!!"

Brett nodded, and they hurriedly used the ledges to jump toward the two fighting people.

"Hey you! Leave her alone!" Eve shouted.

The man whirled around in amazement.

"YOU?!?!" he shouted.

The woman looked utterly baffled that someone would stand up for her, but remained silent.

"Don't you know what'll happen to Vale if you take the Elemental Stars?!" Brett said. "It'll be destroyed! And everyone in it!"

The man scowled, and the hood of his cloak slipped off.

Brett and Eve nearly screamed.

"Does it look like I care?!?!" the man hissed.

The woman that was still blocking his path flinched, but didn't move besides that.

"If you want the Stars, you're not going to succeed!" Brett said out of thin air, already having devised a plan.

Eve looked confused, but the man seemed lightly amused.

"Oh really? If that's so, then bring it on!"

Afterward, only Brett and Eve were found, unconscious, just outside of Sol Sanctum. There had been no sign of anyone else. The Jupiter Star had vanished, while the other Stars had remained. Brett and Eve were both beaten within an inch of their lives, but managed to recover. They remembered nothing of what had happened, nor did they remember the strange man and woman they'd met.

However, what they wanted to know most, was who took the Jupiter Star, for they couldn't remember that either.

For now.

That's the prologue. I need some bad guys/girls, and some more good guys/girls. Hope you enjoyed so far, and remember! *E-mail* your character, don't review it! Ta-ta!

***Chapter 3*: Chapter 1: It Begins**

Chapter 1

Brett quietly picked up a piece of rock, and flipped it a few times, before making it skip across the water. Two months... that's how long it'd been since that incident at Sol Sanctum. He remembered everything up to the portal, and then, his memory had left him. Eve couldn't remember either, sadly enough. He and Eve were allowed in Sol Sanctum, so that they might retrieve their memory, but it didn't help anything.

With a sigh, Brett sat down Indian-style, the chilly fall breeze making his hair wave about. His hair had grown about two inches in those two months, and he hadn't bothered to shorten it. He'd been training extra hard to learn even better Psynergy, for if he had to leave Vale in search of the Jupiter Star, he'd need it. So far, he'd definitely improved a lot, but all he'd been thinking about the past two months, was what had happened. If only he could remember. Sad thing was, he couldn't. Sadly, he watched the water for awhile, watching the silver-colored liquid reflect the stars in the sky.

"Brett??"

He looked back at his mother, showing her she was listening.

"Brett, you've been out here for hours! You should take a rest."

Brett shook his head, and looked back at the lake.

"Brett..."

"No. I want to remember, somehow," Brett intervened.

Nelly sighed, and said: "Okay Brett, but please, don't make it too late, I mean..."

"Moooooooooom!!!" Brett said, highly annoyed now. "I'm not a kid anymore! I'm 18 for Sol's sake! The least you could do is stop babying me like a child!"

Nelly looked baffled. She then returned her face to neutral.

"I'm sorry Brett, it's just the way I am. And besides, I don't trust this place one bit."

Brett looked confused.

"Why?"

"They say that quite some decades back, a young child went here at night, and when she returned, she had changed, for the worst. Some say her parents killed her, others say that the priests banished her. I'm not sure what had happened, but it was here that she changed."

Brett blinked, and said: "Corny fairytale mom."

His mother looked shocked, and then she looked mighty mad.

"You think I'm making this up, do you?!" she demanded.

"I never said that," Brett defended. "I just say it was corny. How can a lake change someone? That's the most ridiculous thing I've ever heard! I mean, come on!"

Brett placed his hands behind his head and lay down on his back. He couldn't imagine, a lake that changed a person forever. How could that be?

After awhile, Nelly left, still fuming, and Brett sat up, wondering. How could this place change a person? This kept his mind busy for awhile. He closed his eyes, and tried to imagine what could've happened. He didn't know how the girl had looked, so he put in a mental picture of Eve when she was young.

Brett made her walk to the lake, humming a gentle tune and swirling around and around. And then, he made her freeze, and then she fell, seemingly unconscious. After a few minutes, she got up, and looked seething mad! This was hard to picture, for he'd never seen Eve mad before. After that, he opened his eyes and rolled them.

"Ridiculous I tell ya," he muttered and got up. "Really ridiculous."

He walked back toward his house, and entered the darkened house, which was only lit with a candle of Psynergy. He calmly walked up to his room, and slumped down onto his bed, not even bothering to undress. All of the fatigue from those two months was finally catching up to him, so it was no wonder he fell asleep almost immediately.

He heard heartbeats, strong ones. It was banging in his ears, his head was ringing from the force, and his body shook. They were steady, then became faster, as if the person was running, or exercising. Heavy breaths could be heard, but he soon realized that they were his own, but the heartbeats weren't his. Not at all.

He saw blue... silver... and red... That's when four bright lights caught his eye. He looked closely, and recognized them as the Elemental Stars.

Mars... a deep red, the color of Fire...

Venus... a light yellow, with its Earth powers...

Mercury... a lovely blue, like Water (and of course, Eve's hair)...

And Jupiter... a deep magenta, strong like the force of Wind...

But... the Jupiter Star was moving away... away from the other stars... away from Vale...

As much as he tried, he couldn't run fast enough to catch the Star, it was too far ahead of him. The heartbeats continued, becoming louder and louder, and it was gaining on him, coming closer and closer. The Star suddenly sped up, and vanished in a flash of light. He slowed down, until he finally stopped, staring at the place the Jupiter Star had vanished.

The Star was going south... toward Vault...

Brett shot up, panting.

'By Sol! What was *that* all about?!' he thought, wiping the sweat from his brow.

He looked out the window, and saw that it was already morning.

"Whoa, I slept like a rock," Brett mumbled, and got out of bed.

As he washed his face, he tried to figure out a few things about his dream. The heartbeats, the swirling colors before

his eyes, the light of the Jupiter Star heading south...

It was as if someone suddenly slapped him.

Somebody had the Jupiter Star in his or her possession, and was heading for Vault, or was already there, or was already way past Vault. By Sol, they really had to move if they wanted to catch that thief!

With a quick move, Brett had his sword sheathed around his waist, and was running down the stairs with two steps at a time, before hurrying out the door. His parents weren't up yet, or they were probably out, because he heard no one shout at him.

Underway, he met up with Erica, an old friend of Eve.

Erica had elbow-length purple hair and deep green eyes, and was friendly, had a good sense of humor, trust must be earned with her, very trustworthy, loyal, kind, caring, but a bit too curious for her own good. She was mostly dressed in a violet tunic over a blue shirt and blue leggings. She was 3 years younger than Brett, meaning she was 15.

"Hey Brett! How are you?" she asked.

"I'm fine I guess," Brett said. "But I have to see Eve, so, if you'll excuse me."

"I do, but you should really get some more sleep, you look terrible."

Brett simply nodded. The two said their good-byes and Brett made his way toward Eve's house.

Eve was outside near the pond in her backyard, looking like she'd been awake for the past two months all along, and he

guessed he did too or Erica wouldn't have said so. Eve had almost seemed to have matured much quicker in the past 2 months, not that Brett didn't, but for Eve, that was a little strange.

Eve noticed him and smiled.

"Mornin' *yawn* Brett. Wha's up?" she asked.

"Bad night?" Brett inquired, though he already knew the answer.

Eve nodded and stretched her back and arms, groaning a little painfully as her bones made a popping sound.

"Eve, I have a strange feeling that tells me that the Jupiter Star is moving away from us," Brett said, and that woke Eve up fully.

"Beg your pardon?!?!" she asked.

After explaining the strange dream he'd had to Eve, she looked a little less confused than before.

"So, we have to leave Vale??" Eve asked, and Brett nodded, thinking she'd flip or something, but she didn't.

Instead, she seemed to think about it, one hand on her elbow, the other under her chin, and her eyes directed up in deep thought.

"Hmmm... well, we can't go alone, that's for sure. We're going to use some help on this one," she mumbled thoughtfully.

Brett thought about this too.

After a while, Brett seemed to come to a solution.

"We could ask Erica to join us," he suggested.

Eve instantly smiled.

"Yes! That's a great idea!" she said, and Brett smiled.

"Let's move then," he said.

Eve walked inside the house to grab her Magic Wand, before the duo left to find Erica. While searching, they split up, and Brett made a small pit stop at the weapon and armor shops. He bought a very strong artifact that looked strong enough and some armor that couldn't be so easily penetrated, just incase. Eve had already bought a new wand the day before, and also some gauntlets, which were carefully hidden under her sleeves.

And in the end, Eve was the one to find Erica instead of Brett. Erica was just helping a few kids move a few boulders using Lift and Move. After the kids had left, Eve cleared her throat, making Erica turn around to look at her.

"Oh, hi Eve! What's wrong?"

"Nothing, I just wanted to talk to you."

Erica fully turned and gave her a nod to show her she was listening. Eve told her of their situation, and Erica seemed to think about it for awhile.

"Who else is coming?" she asked.

"Just me and Brett, no one else," Eve said, and Erica looked thoughtful for a long moment.

"And where, exactly, did you say you were going?" she asked again.

"South to Vault, and if we can't find the Star there, we'll continue on south."

Erica looked up at the sky in deep thought.

Finally, she looked at Eve and said with a sly smile: "Good enough."

Eve smiled broadly.

The three finally left Vale, each waving their parents and friends farewell. The trio had each received a Djinni, one Venus Djinni and two Mercury Djinnis, Flint, Fizz, and Sleet.

The sun burned high above them, seeing as it was a cloudless day, which would result into a freezing night.

"We best get to Vault as quick as possible, unless of course, we'd want to freeze to death on the very first day," Erica said to the others.

"Right, and I don't want to stay in this burning place any longer, or I'll be fried by the time we reach Vault," Brett said.

Erica was about to retort, when a loud "EEEEEP!!!" from Eve caught their attention.

They followed her pointing finger to a large red puddle, which had been dried into hard pool with a darker shade than it originally had been. However, that hadn't been all.

Mixed through it, was a strange, crystalline powder of a dark magenta color.

"Excuse me," a man asked a passing woman.

The woman turned to face the man.

"I'm new here, could you please tell me the fastest route to the Fuchin Temple? I need to get there as fast as possible."

The woman looked up at the man, smiled and said: "Sure sonny, there's a cave to the east of here, which leads to Bibilin. Once you're there, head southeast to Kolima. Then, once you reach Kolima Bridge, keep following the road to the Fuchin Temple."

The man smiled warmly and bowed while saying: "Thank you."

And then he left.

"Is... is that... blood??" Eve asked, a little frightened.

Brett was examining the dried up pool, and nodded.

"Yes, and it's about five days old. So whoever's been bleeding here, has probably gone to Vault for help."

He got up, but was silent.

They continued their journey toward Vault, fighting monsters underway.

After a long and quite exhausting trip, they finally arrived in Vault. It was still day, but the sky was slowly darkening. But even so, a lot of people were still on the streets.

"I wonder how we're going to find the Jupiter Star, I mean, how do we know where to look?" Eve asked, a little unsure.

Brett was about to answer, but never got the chance, because right then, they passed by a Sanctum, and someone, who happened to exit the building walked straight into Eve, seeing as he hadn't been paying attention to where he was walking.

Eve fell onto the ground, and cried out in surprise. Eve looked up, and noticed that the person that had bumped into her was offering her his hand for her to get up. She smiled shyly, and accepted it, allowing him to pull her to her feet.

"I'm very sorry," the man said, "I should've watched where I was going."

Eve just smiled and said: "That's alright."

Brett and Erica watched this all, and Brett was starting to get a little steamed about it all.

The man was mighty tall, 7'0 in advance, had silver colored hair that hung in front the right side of his face, yet about an inch away from his face, not even shielding his sapphire blue eyes. He had highly slanted eyes and rather high cheekbones. And the armor he wore... looked awfully familiar. A dark red cape hung around his shoulders, coming close to his heels.

He smiled at Eve and said: "I would've given you a true apology, but I am in a hurry, so I must leave now."

Eve smiled back, until she asked: "Have we met? You look... awfully familiar."

The man sighed.

"A lot of people tell me that. I guess I look a little too much like my father," he said.

"Who was your father then?" Erica asked, really curious now.

The man shook his head.

"Wish I had time to tell, but I don't, so."

He kissed the back of Eve's hand, smiled once more, and ran off. The trio watched him leave for a moment, until Brett quirked an eyebrow.

'Who was he? He looked so familiar,' he thought.

A few hours later, they sat on a table in the Inn, discussing the latest topic; the strange man they'd met outside of the Sanctum.

"There was something about him that made me want to punch that guy," Brett mumbled, taking a swig of his drink.

'Yeah, him touching Eve, *that's* what!!!' his mind yelled at him.

"He seemed rather nice," Eve said, and Brett almost choked. "But there was something about him that I didn't trust. I don't know what it was."

Erica was quiet and just sipping her rood beer, doing a little thinking herself. She gave it some thought. She closed her eyes, and put up a mental picture of the man they'd just met.

Once she couldn't figure it out, she reopened her eyes, and took a rather large swig of her rood beer. Eve was fingering her fork, her head leaning on her knuckles.

"It was something with an 'S', I can tell you that..." she muttered.

That had been all she could remember. Brett began to summon on different names he knew with an 'S', which weren't much. He kept at it though, raking his brain, trying to find the answer, until...

His eyes snapped open, and he nearly dropped his drink. Eve and Erica looked at him in confusion.

"What is it, Brett?" Eve asked, worried.

"Come one! Tell us!" Erica said, rather curious.

"That guy... he looked... he looked just like..... Saturos..."

With one strong push, the pillar dropped and he easily jumped over. He turned to see if he was being followed. When he was sure he wasn't, he sighed, and continued to walk. He climbed some vines, and pushed a few more pillars down.

After a small while, he came to a cave, which he entered, but not before sadly glancing at the sky.

"Mother... father... where are you?" he whispered to the darkened sky and the full moon, before entering the cave.

Eve and Erica were shocked. Now that they knew who to compare the man with, it made sense. Saturos had also been known for having hair like that guy had, but also for his

quite fierce personality. The only thing that wasn't right, were the skin and the eyes. Saturos's skin had been a pale blue, and his eyes had been fiery red.

"But... but how?" Erica asked. "I thought Isaac, Garet, Ivan and Mia had taken care of both him and Menardi!"

Brett nodded.

"So did I. Everyone said they died when the Venus Lighthouse crumbled. But..." he paused to think. "It could've been that they somehow survived, but, then there's *that* question again."

The trio looked at each other at the same time, and said in unison: "How??"

"Well, Saturos could've used a spell to save himself," a new voice said.

The trio looked to a table not too far away from them.

The man was about 5'10, wasn't a very clean shaved fellow, but he still had no beard, sea-gray eyes, and short black hair. He wore a dark green cloak, a dark green tunic over a white shirt, some black pants, heavy brown boots, had a belt wrapped around the tunic about mid-waist and had a sword strapped around his back.

Brett blinked, twice, because he felt a mysterious air about the man.

"Hey! You should stay out of other people's business!!" Erica said to the man, not really angry, just a tad annoyed.

The man simply humphed, and took a large swig of some of his ale.

"Hey, I'm just trying to help, alright?" he said, keeping his cool.

"Who are you anyway?" Brett asked.

The man smirked for a moment, then let it drop as he said: "Rander."

"So, Rander, you said something about Saturos maybe casting a spell on himself to survive, but, how can one use Psynergy when you're almost dead?" Eve piped up.

Rander looked at her for a moment, and Eve suddenly realized that he probably didn't know what Psynergy was, but...

"Actually, he could've. I've been in a situation that I almost died, but my Psynergy saved my life. Don't ask how," he finished with a shrug, and took another swig from his ale.

Brett's eyes widened a little, then he asked: "But how?"

"Apparently, when Adepts are in danger, their Psynergy protects them," Rander said, not seeming interested in what he was saying at all.

Brett thought about it for a moment, than said: "It would be great to be able to control it. I'm sure of it."

"Probably," Rander said, getting up. "But it probably won't work."

And he left to the sleeping quarters.

They all went to bed a little late, each thinking about the man they'd met just that very same day. Brett was at a loss.

Saturos... How could he have survived? It had been a miracle that Isaac, Garet, Ivan, Mia, Felix and Sheba survived, but Saturos?? He'd been far more injured than the rest of them, so how could Saturos have survived? It didn't make any sense. Was Rander right? Did Saturos survive because of his Psynergy?

There were definitely some weird things going on in this world.

And that was the last thought running through his mind, before he fell asleep.

The next morning, they were all awake before the sun arose, but it didn't really matter. The sooner they left, the better. Rander had checked out that morning, leaving them alone again. They searched the city, trying to decipher where the Jupiter Star could be hidden. Eve searched the eastern portion of town, Erica searched the south, including the cemetery, while Brett searched the western and northern portions, checking pots and crates for any sign of crystalline powder.

It was 10 in the evening when they finally gave up their search. Brett had even searched the attic of the Inn, but nothing. Eve and Erica didn't have too much luck either. They gathered in front of the Inn, discussing matters at hand.

Most people hate it when they search a whole city and find nothing, but what can be worse, is that when you're not really paying attention, you actually find it.

Because when Brett leaned against the Inn and was gazing up, his eye caught sight of a magenta sparkle up on a ledge.

It was all over the ledge, as if someone had climbed up all the way. He walked over to see if he wasn't seeing things.

And he wasn't.

He looked pissed off, and called the girls over. Once they caught sight of the crystalline magenta powder, they too, looked mighty pissed off.

"It was right under our noses and we didn't even see it!!" Eve exclaimed a little angry.

Erica growled angrily and said: "This is not funny! Not at all!"

Brett contained himself though. He looked up and noticed that it wasn't *that* high, but still, he couldn't see anything.

"Hey Erica! Get on my shoulders!" he said.

Erica looked confused, then brightened up and nodded.

Eve could understand why Brett would ask Erica instead of her. Erica was shorter, meaning she was lighter. However, even though she knew this, an angry flame was burning in her eyes that couldn't even be extinguished by her Psynergy. Erica slowly climbed on Brett's shoulders, who made sure she wouldn't fall, not noticing the death glare Eve was giving Erica behind their backs.

Erica managed to look over the ledge, but had to shield her eyes from the setting sun. When she looked, she saw the towers of Kalay.

"What do you see?" Brett shouted up at her.

"Nice view on Kalay up here!" she shouted back down.

Eve dropped her glare the second Erica was off of Brett's shoulders and she smiled.

"We're going to Kalay?!" she asked, suddenly excited.

"Tomorrow," Brett said. "It's late, we should get some rest."

He was wandering through the cave, holding a small orb of electricity above his hand to light the way. His eyes searched the area carefully, trying to find out where to go next. He sighed. What was he going to do?

"I should've asked how to get through this danged cave as well!" he muttered angrily under his breath.

A sudden movement behind him made him whirl around and grab the blood-red axe he always kept with him. The light pink colored gem that formed the pommelstone lightened the area so he could grasp his weapon with both hands.

The small critter let out an "EEEEP!!!" but didn't scurry away like he had expected it would.

It was small, almost as big as a parrot, with small wings, a pointed head like a feather, beady crystalline eyes, small feet and a small stump for a tail. The upper-part was white, but the lower part besides its feet were black.

"Sorry, sorry!" it squeaked. "Didn't mean to startle you!"

He calmed down a bit, but kept his axe out, and walked toward the small critter.

"What exactly are you?" he asked.

"I'm Windia, a Jupiter Djinni! Nice to meet you!" the critter said, even though he didn't see the thing's mouth. "And you're a Jupiter Adept, aren't you?"

He nearly toppled over in shock. "What?! How did you know!?" he demanded.

"Hey! I also know how to use Jupiter Psynergy!"

He blanched.

"Don't worry! I just wanted to know what kind of Adept you were, I didn't discover anything else."

This made him sigh in relief.

"Thank you, I don't like people budding into my thoughts, not after what I've been through."

His face was shadowed with sadness for awhile, and Windia looked up at the Adept in compassion.

"Sorry. Say, I still don't know your name!"

The man bit the inside of his cheek, and finally answered: "Zeros."

Windia nodded.

"Pleasure! Anyway, I get the feeling you're a little lost."

"A *little*!?" Zeros said, looking around. "A more appropriate word would be *completely*!"

The two of them laughed for a moment, before Windia said: "Tell you what; I'll get you out of here, if you let me join you!"

Zeros looked down at the small Djinni.

"I don't..."

"Please?? Pretty please with an artificially cherry flavored candy on the top of a soy based vanilla flavored frozen dessert product? With imitation chocolate flavored molasses topping?"

Zeros blinked.

"Never heard that before. But... seeing as you're so desperate," Zeros sighed, "sure, show the way."

The Djinni seemed to smile, and with a speed Zeros hadn't expected from something that small, flew ahead.

A new day, a new journey.

Brett, Eve and Erica rose with the sun, each ready to travel to Kalay.

"Good morning!" Eve said, smiling broadly.

Eve had been the first to wake, and was waiting for Brett and Erica to eat breakfast with her. Or more precisely, Brett. She'd had a secret crush on him for the longest time, but fear of rejection had always pushed her back.

However, now that he was threatened away from her, she was going to try to win in heart, no matter what the costs. Brett smiled and descended the stairs, Erica not too far behind. Breakfast was rather silent, because no one had anything to say.

Afterwards, they made their way toward the exit, when Brett stopped, apparently thinking about something. Brett finally shook his head, and they left the Inn. Just when they were about to leave Vault, they heard some commotion a few houses up ahead.

"What in Sol's name is going on over there?" Brett asked, confused, as they walked over.

They saw a boy around Brett's age, of about 6'0, yet bulky and muscular, with fierce red hair and pure aqua colored eyes. He wore a yellow tunic, some brown padded gloves, a leather belt, a pair of brown pants and some brown boots. He was holding what looked like a very heavy club, but it was like he hardly noticed the weight.

He was heavily arguing with a man probably twice his own age, neither even noticing that they had an audience.

At some points, they both cursed so heavily on one another, that Brett quickly covered Eve's ears, and that Erica gasped in horror, which you don't see too much. Finally, the older man stomped into a house, which was positioned atop some stairs and slammed the door, rather loud. The boy growled, and ran past them, out of the village, raging mad.

The trio looked at each other in confusion, before shrugging their shoulders at the same time, and heading toward the exit as well.

"That was weird," Erica said softly, once they left the village.

"Yeah," Eve said.

Brett got a world-map from his bag and studied it for awhile.

"Okay, if we keep on going south, we should arrive in Kalay within a few hours, and if we search the city for about 2 hours, we should still be able to make it to Kalay Docks so we can get to Tolbi, is that alright with you girls?" he asked.

"Sure," Eve said.

"We're actually going to Tolbi?! Unreal!!!" Erica asked, suddenly ecstatic.

Brett was about to answer, but something droned it out.

The earth shook, and they were knocked of their feet.

Zeros gave a startled yelp as another boulder landed in front of him. Windia avoided boulders for awhile, until Zeros simply grabbed the Djinni and continued to race to the exit, dodging boulders as best as he could. Windia whimpered as another boulder nearly hit them. Zeros however, kept his cool and kept on running.

Once they were out of the cave, they looked around, trying to figure out what was going on. Zeros turned to the northwest, and his eyes widened as the color drained from his face.

"She didn't..." he whispered, as he watched the smoking mountain for the longest time.

"BY LUNA AND SOL!!! WHAT'S GOING ON AROUND HERE!?!?!" Brett screamed, trying to be heard by the girls, but they couldn't hear him.

They looked back, and all three blanched.

Rander held on to a tree for support, staring at the smoking mountain in ultimate horror. What was happening?

A girl with chin-length black hair that had a red to it, green eyes with red flecks and a pale complexion, ran toward the Temple, trying to run as fast as she could.

"Master Nyunpa!! Master Nyunpa!!" she shouted, running in.

The old master opened his eyes, and looked at her a little strange.

"What is it, child?" he asked.

She panted a few times, then said: "I... I had another vision..."

"Yes?" Master Nyunpa asked.

"We... we're in real trouble..." she panted.

The young girl was not mistaking. It was a horrible sight. Smoke came from Mount Aleph, and inside the mountain, thousands of gallons of molten rock were quickly rising to the top. Once had been bad enough, the second time was even worse. The rest of the Djinnis escaped the Sol Sanctum, leaving the Wise One to try and guide the molten rock past the village that rested near the mountain's feet. He wasn't strong enough though, not at all.

But... there was something else in the village that did. Crystalline water rose from the lake, and took shape of a young five-year-old girl, who aged into a luscious sixteen-year-old, with a stern look. A second figure appeared, a boy this time. The two flew toward the mountain with speed unimaginable, and used their powers to guide the lava away from the village.

Then, the lava stopped, but everyone in the village was silent, for the longest while. They knew what had happened, far too well.

The Elemental Stars had been stolen.

Well, that's chapter 1. I feel *sooooo* loved with all the characters I got. Only thing that I need are bad guys/girls.

From now on, I only accept bad guys/girls. So if you want to be a good guy/girl, tough luck. I've got enough of them. Far too many even.

Special thanks goes to *Brett Morphy*, the brain behind a great deal of the characters.

Brett

Eve

(more of his work to come)

***Chapter 4*: Chapter 2: Four Days Brett**

Chapter 2; Four Days - Brett

A blond 15-year-old boy looked up at the smoking mountain, his golden eyes blinking a few times, wondering who could've been so foolish as to steal the Elemental Stars. He had heard about the Stars, but he wondered what people would want with them if they didn't have the remaining two Stars.

Unless...

"Kai..." he whispered.

Brett, Eve and Erica watched the mountain, which was still smoking, but no longer bursting out in flames. Brett was shocked to say the least.

'How? How did it happen?' was all that was running through his head.

Eve was in a light state of shock, unable to handle what she had just witnessed. Erica was shaking so badly, that she fell to her knees, her face reading nothing but horror.

"They have the remaining Stars..." Eve whispered, getting out of her state of shock.

"But they still need the Jupiter Star..." Erica murmured.

Brett was silent, until the shock vanished from his face and he whirled around. Eve and Erica turned around in surprise, and looked at Brett, who was now stomping away from them, toward Kalay.

After awhile, all three were walking straight to Kalay, trying not to look back. There were no monsters on the way to Kalay strangely enough. The monsters were probably all shaking with fear from that explosion just a second ago. Brett couldn't really care, he just hoped both his parents were alright.

A few hours later, they arrived at Kalay, which was crowded with people who were staring at the still smoking mountain in bewilderment. Each and everyone probably wondered what was going on, but no one asked. Brett, Eve and Erica easily made their way through the crowds, and they all looked around, searching for signs of the Jupiter Star. They found nothing though.

They took the same strategy as they did at Vault. Brett even climbed on a few roofs, trying to find any trace of the Jupiter Star.

"Come on, Flint, mind giving me a hand?" Brett finally asked the Venus Djinni he carried along.

"Sure!" the Djinni squeaked and hopped around, trying to find any sign of the Jupiter Star.

This continued for two hours, like Brett had said, and still nothing. Eve and Erica had also summoned on their Djinnis, but nothing was found. The trio was confused. Where could a simple gem be hidden so carefully? Where, oh where could it be?

Closing another crate, Brett sat atop of it, sighing in annoyance. Eve and Erica were talking with each other, discussing matters at hand, but Brett had searched a solitary spot to think, alone. He leaned on his knuckles, wondering what he was going to do. Now that all the Elemental Stars had been robbed, things weren't looking too good. Not at all.

He gave a sigh, and looked up at the sky. The sun was nearing twelve o' clock, and if they hurried to the Kalay Docks, then they would be in Tolbi in about 3 hours. But something told them they weren't finished in Kalay yet.

When someone cleared his throat beside him, he looked up, only to meet the eyes of the boy they'd seen in Vault when they had left.

"Yes, is something wrong?" Brett asked smoothly.

"I'm searching for someone, and I was wondering if you might be able to assist me," the boy said, just as smoothly.

Brett thought for a moment, then asked: "Who are you looking for?"

"A woman, she looks like she's sixteen, but I think she's much older. Last time I saw her she wore a pink dress and a short skirt, shoulder guards with purple body-length cape and a leather chest plate. She has orange-red hair, pale skin, high cheekbones, yellow eyes, and had a good figure. See anyone like her?"

Brett thought for a moment, then said: "Not really. Why are you looking for this woman?"

The other boy sighed and said: "She stole something from me that I find very important, and she robbed a lot of other

people in Vault. I'm here to try and find her. Now, I'd better get going and try to locate her."

The boy was about to walk away, when Brett stood up and placed a hand on the boy's shoulder.

"Look, if you want, we could help you, we have nothing to do right now anyway," Brett told him.

The boy looked a little confused, until he sighed.

"Fine, I probably won't be able to find that woman on my own anyway."

"I'm Brett, by the way. What's your name?" Brett asked as they walked back to the girls.

"Anthony," the boy said.

After some introduction, the group began to search for the mysterious female. Kalay was as busy as ever once again, but there seemed to be a light tension here and there, as if there was a bomb somewhere in town, which would blow up any second. So, once again, the group was searching Kalay for any signs of the thief. However, Kalay was a big town, and it took them some time.

After a few hours, the four of them sat at a table in the Inn, trying to figure out where to go next, when Brett suddenly saw something he thought he'd seen before. Or more specifically, someone.

She had light blond hair, which could be also called the color of the ground, a light red skin, had a circlet around her forehead with spikes on the side, wore a dress with red patterns on it, an orange sash, some heavy metal gauntlets,

a red chest plate with the symbol of the Fire Clan Of The North on it, and a fire-red cape.

Brett blinked, twice, before believing what he was seeing.

"Menardi???" he whispered, and the other three people at the table turned to face the woman also.

Eve and Erica looked like they were about to topple over, while Anthony looked suspicious.

"She was with the bandits I've been looking for," he whispered to the gang. "She left the group however and went to someplace north, not sure where."

Brett was trying to think off where he'd seen that woman before, but he didn't know. He couldn't remember. Of course, she looked like Menardi, but he had a feeling like he'd seen her somewhere else before. That's when he registered what Anthony had said.

'North?! But... Vale is north of Vault... which means she...'

"I have a feeling we're in trouble," Brett muttered.

When the woman turned and headed up to the sleeping quarters, they caught sight of her fiery red eyes, which were directed at them for a millisecond, before they focussed elsewhere.

The four of them looked at each other quizzically, before heading upstairs after the woman, planning on having a word with her.

"At points like this, I wish I was a Jupiter Adept instead!" Eve mumbled as they calmly ascended the stairs.

However, once they arrived there---

"She's not here!" Erica said, dumbfounded.

Everyone looked around, trying to find the woman, but not finding her. And it was starting to get rather frustrating! Eve had discovered a door to the side, but it was locked, so they were out of luck.

"Wouldn't you know it?!" Eve said, frustrated, hands on her hips. "Locked!"

At that point, she placed one hand on the door to lean on it, left leg crossed over her right, when it happened.

"EEEEYAAAAA!!!!" Eve yelped as the door flew open and she tumbled in, landing flat on her face.

Erica and Anthony almost burst out laughing, while Brett helped the girl up. They stepped into the room, amazed when they noticed all the crates and boxes in the room.

Brett's first thought was: 'Maybe the Jupiter Star is around here.'

Anthony looked around in confusion.

"Whoa..." he muttered. "I never knew that they stole this much."

"Damn, busted!" a smooth feminine voice cooed, and the four of them turned toward the door in confusion.

There, stood none other than the girl Anthony had described, up to the smallest detail. Anthony growled.

"Pheonixia!!" he hissed with venom in his voice.

The girl smiled and said: "That would be me! Yes. And you have some handsome company, Anthony!"

Brett looked confused, until it dawned to him that the girl, Pheonixia, was looking at *him*.

'Ooooooh boy! No good!' he thought.

"Get a life, Pheonixia! I know how that sneaky mind of yours works!" Anthony said.

Eve was almost boiling with rage, but kept silent.

"Awwwwe, you're no fun!" Pheonixia said like a ditzy schoolgirl.

"Shut the hell up already!!" Anthony shouted, and Erica, Eve and Brett looked at Anthony in shock.

The three of them were religious, meaning they didn't curse, so they didn't really approve of Anthony's cursing, but they couldn't order him not to curse.

"I know more about you than you think, so shut up!!" he continued.

"As if! You could never---"

"Oh Pheonixia, please shut up!" a new voice said, and Pheonixia turned to the door.

The woman that looked exactly like Menardi walked in.

"B-but..." Pheonixia started, but she was cut off.

"Silence Pheonixia, and I thought you said you hid everything on a place no one could find."

"I... I just thought..."

"Never mind!"

Suddenly, the woman seemed to notice Brett, and she scowled angrily.

"You again?! I knew I should've finished you off when I had the chance!" she hissed, and Brett's eyes widened.

He *knew* her? But... where...

The hood fell off to reveal flaming red eyes, earth colored hair, light red skin, and an angry face. The only thing that was out of place was that the face was that of a female, not at all male. The duo almost screamed at the resemblance between the woman and Menardi.

"Does it look like I care?!"

It flashed before his eyes all of the sudden, and that's when he remembered where he'd seen that woman before.

Brett's eyebrows furrowed and he hissed: "I know you! You're the one who came to Vale to steal the Elemental Stars!!"

Eve gasped in surprise, when she also seemed to remember, and she showed pure anger for the first time in her life.

Anthony and Erica looked at the strange woman in shock, who simply scowled even deeper. No one noticed Pheonixia leave after the woman had given her a small sign.

"That's right! And I would've succeeded the very first time if it hadn't been for you and your measly friends!" she hissed.

Brett clenched his fists, and gritted his teeth. Anthony finally recovered from his shock and was about to open his mouth, when several bandits stalked into the room.

Pheonixia walked back in and asked: "Now what?"

The woman didn't move when she asked: "Where's Kai?"

"He's heading for Lunpa as we speak, with the four Elemental Stars," one of the bandits said.

Brett, Eve and Erica looked stunned.

"*Four* Elemental Stars?! But... I thought the Jupiter Star was missing!!" Eve said.

Anthony felt a little out of place. He knew so little of everything that was going on.

The strange woman sighed and said: "Yes, it's missing indeed. But we discovered two *new* Elemental Stars."

The four of them looked confused.

"One of the Stars is still missing, and the other is hard to get."

"Real hard," Pheonixia mumbled under her breath.

The mystery woman turned to the bandits and said: "Finish them off, and I want *his* head," she pointed to Brett, "brought to me on a silver platter!"

And she left the room, with Pheonixia right behind her, whom winked at Brett and said: "Nice meeting you!"

The bandits had quickly surrounded the four of them, but they already had their weapons drawn, ready to battle.

However, they weren't prepared for the number of attacks they had sent in their direction. Brett's eyes widened as he got ready for the crucial impact, when red spirals encircled him, and the crucial hit was no more dangerous than a paper-cut. The others had a similar effect, but Anthony was the only one unaffected with confusion.

And on his shoulder sat Flash, a Mars Djinni.

"I found the little thing a few weeks back," Anthony explained when he saw their confused faces.

The golden haired boy walked into the café, his hood covering his face. He walked over to a small table, which held a single man. The man looked up, and smiled.

"Hey there, is something wrong?" he asked, as the boy sat down on the table.

"Yes, badly," the boy said. "I need your help."

The man quirked an eyebrow and said: "Could be, but you know that if you want info from me, you have to---"

The boy suddenly looked over his shoulder, gave a whistle, making a large cobra rise up on a table, surrounded by five pebbles. The boy faded out, appeared near the table with the cobra, snatched the five pebbles from beneath the snake with lightning-fast speed, blurred again, and was back at the table of the man, smirking wickedly from under his hood.

The man shook his head, and said: "I don't think I'll ever get used to that!"

The boy just nodded, and stopped smirking.

"The Elemental Stars have been robbed. And I have a suspicious feeling I know who stole them."

Anthony smashed one of the bandit's helmets, and kicked the guy between the family jewels, making the guy howl in pain. One hit against the guy's neck, and he was unconscious. He whirled around and banded another bandit in his face with his club, giving the guy a broken nose and a trip to unconsciousness. He jumped up, flipped backwards, and kicked one more to the back of his head, banging him against one of the walls.

Brett growled angrily, and raised his sword to block a blow from a bandit. He blocked, countered, only to have it miss, he dodged, swung at the guy's legs, but had it blocked, when a sudden quake caught the man off guard and sent him down. Brett kicked the man against his neck and knocked him unconscious. A second bandit ran at him, but he dodged, and kneed the man in his stomach, before knocking him unconscious with his elbow. The third tried to ambush him, but Brett had heard him and had whirled around, blocking the downward slash. Brett grabbed the guy's tunic, dropped back, placed one foot in the man's stomach, and catapulted him into a wall.

Erica grabbed her mace and swung at a bandit, hitting him in the stomach. This caused him to drop his dagger he fought with and grasp his aching stomach. Erica kicked him to his chin and then grabbed the dagger, which she quickly pushed into her sheath. She then placed her mace away,

and grabbed her long sword, effectively blocking a swing for her head. One kick to the back of the man's knees made him fall down, and with the hilt, she knocked him unconscious. She then grabbed the dagger she'd picked up, and slashed another one over his chest, before punching him in the face and kicking him into unconsciousness.

Eve sent another blast of magic from her wand at a bandit, sending him back into a wall. When the guy dropped, he was knocked out cold. Eve hurriedly ducked to avoid getting slashed at, and with a quick move, she had knocked the guy's legs from under. She shot back to her feet, hurriedly brought her fists up and smashed them down on the bandit's face. She then whirled around and sent one of them away with a swift roundhouse-kick, which she had learned from Brett. The bandit's jaw was easily knocked out of joint, and he dropped to the ground, out cold.

They looked around to see that all the bandits were out cold. After catching their breaths, they smiled and Anthony went to get someone that went by the name of Loran.

Afterward, every single crate was searched, and Anthony had found what he was looking for; a black charm with the symbol of The Fire Clan Of The North on it, something he had received from a strange girl who seemed to be fearing her life. She had asked if he had wanted to look after the charm until she came to retrieve it, after which she had run, tears streaming from her eyes, which had been red and puffy.

The four of them were resting at the Inn, each enjoying their victory, with Brett, Eve and Erica explaining Anthony about the Elemental Stars. Anthony was astonished about it all, and after the three were finished with their story, he told them his.

"That woman had been a little weird. It's been 2 months since I met her, and I haven't seen her since. It was like someone was chasing her around the globe or something," Anthony mumbled, taking a swig of his drink.

Brett nodded thoughtfully.

"Can I see it?" Erica asked.

Anthony nodded and gave the girl the charm, allowing her to study it carefully. The symbol was engraved in dark silver, which reminded Brett of something.

Pain surged through his arm, but then, it was gone. He looked up. A young woman smiled at him, then turned to the earthen haired woman and raced forward, a strange black charm dangling from her tender neck.

Brett heavily shook his head. He didn't really like the flashbacks he now had. Why did he have them now? Now of all times? He raked a hand through his hair, and watched Eve and Erica study the black charm. After announcing that he was going to bed, he left the trio, and went up to his room to think. He sat down on the bed, thinking.

His head was resting on his hands, and he was gazing up at the ceiling. He tried to remember the face of the woman that had owned the charm, but his mind wasn't ready for it, and he was left with one major headache. Maybe if he went to sleep, his dreams would tell him a little more.

With that thought he laid down on the bed after undressing to nothing but his boxers, and falling asleep.

Red... silver... blue... deep magenta... they all swirled around him as he walked, trying to find something, anything, that would indicate a life-force. That's when he saw them.

The Elemental Stars...

Mars... a deep red, the color of Fire...

Venus... a light yellow, with its Earth powers...

Mercury... a lovely blue, like Water...

And Jupiter... a deep magenta, strong like the force of Wind...

But... there were two others...

One of them a lovely white color...

The other an ultra dark color...

The Jupiter star was heading north-northeast, while four others moved north-northwest, and the last was staying at one place.

He watched them... waiting... when something was heard...

Heartbeats... calm ones... then faster... louder... and somewhere ahead of him, he saw the insignia of The Fire Clan Of The North... lighting up fiercely...

With a bright magenta flash, everything went black...

Brett calmly opened his eyes, and stared up at the ceiling. Which were they going to follow? If they followed the four Stars heading toward Lunpa, they would run into Pheonixia and that other woman again, and that star in Tolbi didn't seem like it was moving any time soon. Brett sighed and got up from bed. After dressing, he had his mind made up.

'Bilibin, here we come!'

Eve was sitting at a table, listening to Erica and Anthony converse, but not really hearing them. Eve was still furious.

'If that ditz even *dares* to hit on Brett, Sol help her!' she thought angrily.

Her fingers dug into her hands, and her nails would've gone through the delicate skin, if Brett hadn't come down.

"Eve, Erica, get your stuff. We're leaving to Bilibin," he said, and that's when they noticed he carried his pouch with him around his shoulder.

Erica looked confused.

"Bilibin? I thought we were going to Tolbi?" she asked.

"There's been a change of plans," Brett stated simply, and was out the door within a second.

Eve and Erica looked at each other a little strangely, before rushing to their rooms to get their stuff. Anthony watched, a little shocked about the sudden departure.

A little while later, everyone was packed, and ready to head back north again. Anthony was also among them, reasons

yet unknown. The trip north usually doesn't take them too long, but every monster was out again, forcing them to stop every now and then to battle. They had decided to take a shortcut through one of the forests, seeing as Anthony knew the way.

Brett was amazed by what Anthony knew, as they continued through the woods, until ---

With a loud screech, a Venus Djinni jumped from a tree on top of Brett's head. Brett yelped in surprise, but could do nothing about the Djinni. He didn't even have to, for Anthony knocked the Djinni off with his club. Brett quickly grabbed his sword as the Djinni shook his "head".

"EARTHQUAKE!!!" Brett shouted as golden spirals encircled him and a large Earthquake made the Djinni topple over.

Eve grabbed her wand, and it let out a blast of icy wind at the Djinni, who shivered, before shaking it off. The Djinni suddenly shot forward, and headbutted Brett into his stomach, making the Venus Adept gasp in surprise.

"FLARE!!!" Anthony shouted, having pure red spirals encircle him, and shot a blast of Fire Psynergy at the Djinni.

The Djinni was unaffected.

Brett finally growled and shouted: "FLINT!!!" while jumping into the air, the Venus Djinni coming out and creating a bright golden hue around Brett's sword.

Brett slashed down at the Djinni, who cried out in surprise, and fell.

Brett straightened up as the Djinni jumped up. It hopped up and down, before spinning around wildly, and changing into

golden sparks that shot up into the sky, which came in contact with Brett. He smiled.

"Looks like Arret is mine," he said turning to his friends.

They continued to battle enemies as they headed back to Vault.

They arrived at Vault within another hour, making it around noon. The sun hid behind a few clouds, making the day at least half-bearable. However, there was a strange tension among them, as if they were carrying a bomb around their neck or something. No one knew exactly what to say; if anything at all.

Anthony was the one to break the silence.

"Hey, would you guys mind if I went along with you?"

Brett turned around, his hair whipping about as he looked at Anthony in surprise.

"Go along with us? Why??" he asked, as Eve and Erica also looked at Anthony questioningly.

"I still have to capture Pheonixia," Anthony said. "Either that or I'll never be accepted by my 'father' again."

Brett was a little confused. Suddenly he remembered when Anthony had been arguing with that old man in front of the Mayor's Manor, and figured that that old man had been Anthony's father.

"But... what happened then?" Eve asked.

"Well, I'm a member of the local guard here in Vault and fight alongside of my adopted father to protect Vault from Bandits. I'm the strongest fighter in the guard and my father was proud of me. But once I started to manifest these powers, which was actually Psynergy, my father said that I was a coward who needed smoke and mirrors to win battles, and he disowned me. So, to win back my father's respect, I have to capture Pheonixia."

Eve and Erica looked a little shocked, but Brett seemed perfectly fine.

"I see. Well, I don't see why not then."

Anthony smiled.

After buying some brand new artifacts, they left toward Goma Cave. What they discovered however, was that someone else had been there before. And that wasn't all they found.

Brett rubbed the magenta sparkles between his thumb and index finger, wondering what was going on.

"What's going on here?" Eve asked, voicing his thoughts.

"Wish I knew. Let's go already," Brett said, and they headed into Goma Cave.

Inside of the cave, they searched for signs of magenta sparkles, but found none. Anthony for once, had no clue on where to go, because he never went to Goma Cave. They continued through, fighting Amazes and Zombies on the way. They weren't that much trouble, but they had the

urgency to show up in larger groups, making it harder to defeat them.

Anthony bashed another Zombie's skull, and landed on the ground with a thud. Brett sliced another Amaze in half, and smiled at his handy work. Erica simply threw her mace through an Amaze, before running over to it to pick it up. Eve simply twirled her wand and hit a Zombie in the face with the end.

They continued on, Eve wiping the sweat from her brow. No one noticed the footprints on a lower ridge.

"Strange," Erica suddenly mumbled, looking around.

"What?" Brett asked, turning around.

"Look around!"

They all looked around, and noticed that there were large pieces of rock scattered around the area, and large gaping holes in the ceiling, showing the darkening sky. Psynergy stones lay scattered between the large pieces of rock, each a strange mixture of gold, magenta, blue and red.

"Now that's funny," Anthony said, picking up a golden Psynergy stone.

He threw it up, caught it, and looked at it. Nothing happened.

"Can I have one?" Brett asked.

Anthony complied and tossed the golden colored one at Brett, who caught it. Brett instantly felt refreshed... and the Psynergy stone disappeared.

The four of them were confused at first, until a light seemed to be lit in Anthony's head, and he picked up a red Psynergy stone, which refreshed him, and vanished. The girls also noticed the pattern, and each picked up a blue Psynergy stone. They continued to walk, until...

"DUCK!!!" Anthony screamed, and just as they did, a blast of fire surged over them, missing them by a hair.

They all looked up to see a fire-red Mars Djinni growling at them. Erica and Eve watched the Djinni and Anthony shook his head to stop its ringing. Brett quickly grabbed his sword and was ready for action. The Djinni raced at him with a loud scream, but Brett had been ready.

"RAMSES!!!" he screamed.

The world made place for a desert, where a sphinx-like beast slammed his hand on the ground to create an earthquake, before firing his hand at the poor Djinni. Eve smiled broadly, and decided to lend a hand.

"NEREID!!!" she screamed.

A young girl seated on the back of a large turtle appeared and her red eyes were ablaze, while her black hair was tied in two buns on either side of her head. She simply waved her hand toward the Djinni, and a giant wave of water crushed the Mars Djinni almost instantly.

The Djinni was easily down for the count. It jumped up, hopped up and down, before spinning around wildly, and dissolving into golden bolls of energy, which merged into Anthony.

"Well, Onrefni just joined the party!" Anthony said with a smirk on his face.

As they came out from Goma Cave, they instantly saw the town of Bilibin, but Brett had the feeling that they were being watched. However, he let it slide, and the four of them entered Bilibin.

Naturally, Bilibin was a wondrous place, and the girls had soon forgotten that their real plans had been directed at Tolbi. They started their search, and each searched a different portion of town. The sun was setting, and the sky was darkening, meaning that night would soon come. Brett was just planning to meet his friends at the Inn, when a young girl's laughter made him turn around.

He saw a rather young girl, holding a doll that had been saved from a trip to the trashcan. However, that wasn't what caught Brett's attention. It were the magenta colored sparkles that decorated it. Brett walked over to the girl.

"Hey girl," Brett said, smiling at the young girl.

The girl looked up with lovely blue eyes and curly brown hair.

"Hello," she said politely.

"May I ask, how those magenta sparkles came on your doll?" Brett inquired.

The girl nodded and said: "Some nice man fixed my doll when it lost its head. He was really nice! But he had to leave real soon. He asked my mommy and daddy how to get to Kolia... Kolami... Kola..."

"Kolima??" Brett offered.

"Yeah! Kolima! And then he left."

Brett nodded.

"How did this 'nice man' look like?"

The girl thought for a moment, then said: "He wore a pretty armor, and his hair hung in front of his eye."

"Thank you."

"Anytime."

Brett thought about this. If that guy that looked like Saturos had been here, either he too knew that the Jupiter Star was around here, or he had been here for his own reasons. It kept him busy the entire trip to the Inn, as he was trying to figure out why that guy left a trail of magenta sparkles everywhere he went.

Suddenly, Brett halted. There was something nagging at the back of his mind, and it made him look around carefully.

"Hey Brett!!"

A familiar voice aroused Brett from his trance, and he looked back to see Eve walking over to him.

"Did you find anything?" she asked.

Brett chose his words carefully.

"Besides the fact that that guy who looked like Saturos was here, nothing," he finally said.

Eve looked at him in astonishment.

"That guy was here?!" Eve repeated.

"Yeah."

The two of them went to the Inn, and the story was soon on everyone's mind.

"Saturos?" Anthony questioned. "I know of 'em, of course, but wasn't he supposed to be dead?"

"Well, we heard from a reliable source that he might've survived somehow, though we're still not sure how," Erica said.

Anthony quirked an eyebrow at the girl.

"Oh? Who told you that?" he asked.

"Some guy named Rander, and he---" Eve started, when Anthony began to chuckle.

"Rander?! Mr. I-know-more-about-the-wild-than-thee?!" Anthony asked, trying to suppress his chuckles.

"What's wrong with that?" Brett asked.

Anthony shook his head and said: "Nothing, it's just that in the few weeks he's been at Vault, that he'd been rude nearly all of the time, like he had something stuck up his ass or something. Cranky too."

Brett didn't approve of Anthony's tongue, but kept his own inside his mouth as if in fear of losing it if he didn't.

"So he wasn't very loved?" Eve said.

"Nope."

The subject staid on Rander for a few hours more, until it reverted back to their original subject. The four of them

discussed many things that could've happened to Saturos or Menardi, but none of it made sense. The only thing that did, was Rander's explanation, although they didn't like to admit it.

However, there was something that wasn't right; Saturos had a blue cape and red eyes, while this other guy had the exact opposite. There was something else that Brett had only just figured out; the ears.

The Fire Clan Of The North all had sharply pointed ears, but people tend not to look at something such a miniscule as that. And this guy that looked like Saturos was the wrong height (Saturos was 7'2, not 7'0).

When the clock struck 12, Brett turned around to face the old Coo-coo clock. A new day already. The third day after the eruption, meaning they'd been out searching for the Jupiter Star for nearly a week now. Only now they had even more responsibilities; such as retrieving the other Stars. Question was; which came first?

"By Luna, I had no idea it was this late already!" Erica exclaimed, breaking the silence right after the Coo-coo clock stopped coo-cooing.

After some 'goodnights', and 'pleasant dreams', the four of them went up to the rooms they had paid for, and enjoyed a good night's sleep.

While everyone else was sleeping, a golden haired, golden eyed boy sat at the bow of the boat that traveled to the Kalay Docks, from which he would travel to Kalay, Lunpa, and then back to Tolbi once again. After all, Colosso was but 2 days away, and he wouldn't miss that for the world. Of

course, he could easily fly to Lunpa, but Kai would suspect that.

Kai knew about his 'special abilities', having experienced them before. Kai had survived somehow, though he had no clue as to how. He pulled out the dagger from its sheath, and studied it from all angles.

The whole dagger was gold, even the blade. On the hilt were gold, blue, red and purple crystals. It had a diamond at the bottom of the hilt. He had picked it up right before leaving Tolbi.

'This should've taken care of him,' he thought as he placed it away. 'It should've, but it didn't. Why?'

Morning came rather fast, and it had been decided (by Eve) that they were heading towards Imil. It was a 6 hour travel, and they wanted to hurry back too so they could enter in Colosso, if they could. Isaac and his friends had had difficulties getting into Colosso as well, and, hadn't it been for Babi, Isaac never would've entered at all.

As the subject staid on Babi, everyone was wondering if Babi was still alive or not. This brought forth a whole new subject though.

They left Bilibin, and headed north-north-west, toward Imil, and were still discussing about Babi, when Erica suddenly spoke up.

"This reminds me of something I'd heard somewhere. There had been a girl in Vale who said; 'If you wish to grow old, don't slow the aging process, but make it count until it's over'. That girl was rather smart, for a kid."

Brett nodded. He had heard of that girl as well, yet hadn't met her. No one knew where she had gone, but she had vanished at some point. All conversation stopped then, and they continued to battle monsters as they headed toward Imil.

They walked to the Bilibin Cave Entrance, and instantly saw a small sapling. Anthony received one of Brett's Djinnis, and used Growth on the small sapling. Brett took back his Djinni, and they each climbed the vine up to a cliff. A short walk later, they arrived at a small canyon, which they hopped over. After some sliding, they finally came to the entrance, and easily went in.

Inside, they instantly noticed the deadly quiet, as if it was completely deserted. Each of them looked around, confused, before they slid down a slope, and started their way through the cave.

For one reason or another, all was quiet, and not a single monster reared its hide. As the temperature was going down, they each got their fur-coats out and put them on hastily, due to the constant freezing winds that blew over. Their footsteps echoed through the darkness of the cave, as they continued through. Their fingers and toes were already starting to freeze, and Brett kept popping them to prevent them from fully freezing.

It made the others a tad nervous.

"Brett! Stop that for once!!" Anthony shouted angrily as Brett popped his fingers again, and it bounced off the walls.

Brett looked at Anthony from the corner of his eyes, then focussed back on the path. He cupped his hands over his mouth, and blew, making his hands warm due to his breath.

He rubbed them a few times, when he suddenly came to a halt.

Anthony, Eve and Erica looked at Brett in confusion, until Brett turned around and a large quake shook the earth a little further up ahead.

A human-like shape sprinted off, but Brett had managed to get a good look at him.

He had short brown hair, sheaths for daggers on his shoulders, a muscular build, wasn't exactly handsome, but neither was he ugly. He wore brown pants, a travel vest with a cotton shirt underneath and a bandana around his forehead. Brett didn't really see what kind of weapons the man had been carrying along, but Brett didn't really care.

He was gone now.

Once Brett was completely sure of that, they continued on.

He grabbed the cloak, and put it over himself, staying in the shadows. The cloak instantly worked, and the guards were easily tricked, then killed with his sword. A sword with a gold hilt, and a blade that looked as if it could slice through the best of steel. He stayed in the shadows, looking everywhere to ensure that no one with Psynergy was around. Because he knew that people with Psynergy *could* see him.

Carefully, he tiptoed into the fortress, past the guards and through the gates. His boots didn't make a sound as he walked through the corridors, avoiding guards whenever he had to. No one had seen him so far, which was a good thing. And he hoped to keep it that way for awhile. After almost an hour of walking, he suddenly he heard voices.

"What do you mean?" a feminine voice said.

He carefully peeked through an open door, and saw two people three people. One of them was a girl with orange colored hair, and another woman with earthen colored hair. The third, was a man with gray eyes and short coal black hair, dressed in a tunic, cloak and some armor, who he knew as Kai.

"The Jupiter Star can be miles away for all I know," the earthen haired female said. "If I know her, she's a thousand light-years away, figuratively speaking off course, this world isn't that large."

'Her?' he wondered. 'The Jupiter Star is in possession of... a woman? How bizarre!'

"Is she that fast?" Kai asked, looking rather interested as his hand was resting on the hilt of his sword.

"Yes Kai, she is. She's either going to some place that's away from the Jupiter Lighthouse, or she's heading toward it. I'm not too sure," the earthen haired woman said again.

"But, what will she do with the Jupiter Star anyway?" the orange haired girl asked.

The earthen haired woman shook her head to show that she didn't know.

When he heard footsteps heading his way, he hurriedly hid behind a rock, just incase it was someone who could use Psynergy. He looked over the ledge and gasped softly.

The guy that was walking over was 6'2, had sharply pointed ears, a strange black elven hat, and wore similar clothing, but the only thing that fell out of place, was that his eyes

were cloaked in constant shadow. A shield was tied around his left arm, a sword-sheath hung on his back, he carried a bow and arrow along, along with a pouch which seemed to be overloaded with stuff, but it didn't seem to bother the man. The man's mouth was curled downward in a look of utter disgust, and his sharp nose was lightly standing up at the tip.

The man entered the room the other three had been in, and he heard a greeting coming from Kai.

"Morning Yame, anything new?"

The man shook his head, and staid in one of the darkest corners of the room, not moving an inch.

'Alright, I've seen enough!' he thought, and left as silent as he came.

Only thing he hadn't counted on, was Yame's voice saying: "Oh, and there was somebody eavesdropping on your conversation outside."

He froze, and thought: 'Uh-oh,' before running as fast as his feet could carry him, as quiet as possible.

The ice pillar melted once Anthony had used Blast on it. They all continued, and finally came to the exit. Outside, the wind blew hard against their faces, making them stagger back. Brett peered through an opening between his arms to look for Imil in the storm. They had spent 1 hour in Bilibin Cave due to the fact that they didn't have to fight, and it would take a while before they'd arrive at Imil.

They continued on, fighting monsters of all sizes as they went. When they killed 4 Grizzlies, they took the furs and replaced their old coats with the furs, which were surprisingly warmer. Thus, the journey continued. The wind was hard to handle, as were the monsters, and both combined, made it hard for them to get to Imil.

But, three hard hours later...

They stepped through the gates of Imil, and they each gave a sigh of relief, which caused small clouds to form. A lot of people appeared to be sick, so the Mercury Lighthouse hadn't been lit yet. That was good. Not good for the people, but good for the world.

They continued through the city, searching for any sign of the Jupiter Star, but finding none. The ice was slippery, and they had to be extra careful so as not to slip and land on their rear. Hours went by, and still no sign of the Jupiter Star. Something here was definitely not right. Where could that stupid Star be?

The four of them continued to search, until they finally gave up.

"I find this highly annoying!" Anthony mumbled, when they were all standing in front of the Inn, wondering what to do now.

"That makes two of us then," Brett muttered, looking up toward the sky, his breath coming out in little clouds of dew.

Eve shivered as she pulled her coat tighter around herself, looking around, still looking for a sign of the Jupiter Star.

Erica gave a long sigh, and said: "What do you say we head to Tolbi then? I want to enter in Colosso."

Brett looked at Erica, then at the ground, deep in thought.

Brett finally looked up, and said: "Let's move then."

That was everything they needed, as they left Imil, to return later on.

With a madly beating heart, he exited Lunpa, and mounted the horse waiting there for him. Within seconds, the horse was riding down the hills, toward Tolbi using the pass. It might be a longer route, but everyone who knew him well, knew he would usually take the boat to Tolbi.

He was nearing the docks, and he looked back to see if anyone had followed him. It had taken him hours to escape, and it had taken him even longer to get this far. Looking back however, was the worst mistake he made thus far.

As his horse suddenly staggered and whined, he was thrown off guard, as well as off of his horse. He cried out in surprise as he landed, rather hard. When he looked up, he noticed that a girl had probably tripped and was now about to be stepped on. However, someone raced over and pushed the girl to safety, right before the girl could get killed easily.

The boy checked if the girl was alright, before looking up at him, rather mad. He didn't bother though, and got back up, dusting himself off. He gave the other boy one glance, before mounting his horse again, and riding off toward Tolbi.

They had traveled from Imil straight to the Kalay Docks, although no one knew how they did it, and then this guy almost killed Eve! Who was that guy anyway?

The guy dusted himself off, and rode off on his horse after giving Brett one last glance. Eve was still shaking and looked rather frightened. Anthony and Erica walked over, and Anthony was staring after the other guy as he strode off, his eyes wide.

Erica huffed.

"Who was that guy? He didn't even apologize!"

Brett helped Eve up to her feet, and helped her stand for awhile, until she could stand on her own again. Without a word, they headed toward the Kalay Docks, where they took the first boat to Tolbi.

When he arrived, he calmly got off of his horse, and noticed the crowd of people that had flooded Tolbi.

He gave a sigh, and was about to leave, when he heard someone say: "Wow! I can't believe I'm in Tolbi! This is amazing!!"

He looked around, and then noticed a group of four standing there, two guys, two galls. It had been one of the girls that had spoken.

"Hey, chill out. What's the deal? It's just a city!" one of the guys said.

"How can you be so calm?! We're in Tolbi! Where the oldest man in the world lives! Doesn't that excite you in the least!?" the second girl asked.

The guy sweat dropped.

"Babi? What about him?" the second guy said, his arms crossed over his chest.

"He's just some old geezer who wants to live forever. Big deal."

The first guy nodded and said: "I agree on that one. If you wish to grow old, don't slow the aging process, but make it count until it's over."

Hey now, wasn't that what that girl from Vale had said? (Rereads chapter) Well what do you know! It is!

Who are those four that were talking at the end? All this and more will be revealed in the next chapter: ***Four Days - Zeros***

New characters that have been named:

Anthony*

Kai

Pheonixia*

Yame

*Creations of Brett Morphy

***Chapter 5*: Chapter 3: Four Days Zeros**

Chapter 3; Four Days - Zeros

Zeros watched the smoking mountain for a long while, with Windia on his shoulder.

"Oh no," Windia groaned sadly.

After standing there for awhile, Zeros finally turned around, and began his journey to Bilibin. The monsters were quiet, so he didn't have to fight that much.

"Zeros, you said something about somebody, who were you talking about?" Windia asked.

Zeros looked at the small Djinni and said: "Nobody."

Zeros refused to talk after that, and Windia caught the hint.

The two arrived in Bilibin easily enough, and Windia had found a cozy spot in Zeros's pouch. The trip through Goma Cave had worn him out greatly, so he went to visit the Inn first. Everyone was talking about the eruption, but Zeros didn't bother.

He ordered a drink for himself, and sighed. Zeros was not one to take breaks very lightly, due to the fact that he didn't like to show his vulnerable state. This was one of the reasons that he rarely slept.

Zeros's ear suddenly twitched and he looked up to notice someone enter the Inn. It was a sixteen-year-old boy of around 5'4, with a scar running diagonally across his face.

His hair was black and he had eyes of a deep topaz color. He wore long purple robes, with dark purple stars scattered about on it. He also wore a pendant around his neck. Zeros knew the symbol engraved on the symbol all too well.

The Fire Clan Of The North.

The boy was rather out of place by the looks of it, and he walked through the Inn for awhile, until he came to a stop at Zeros's table.

"Can I sit here?" the boy asked.

Zeros nodded slightly, leaning on one elbow and holding the side of his hand in front of his mouth to hide his look of suspicion.

"I'm Janias, by the way, who are you?" the boy asked kindly, but Zeros could easily sense the boy's evil.

This boy could mean trouble.

Nonetheless, Zeros gave the boy his name.

"Zeros."

"Zeros? That's a nice name!" the boy said.

Zeros's eyebrows furrowed a little as he could clearly hear the sickly sweet voice he used.

"So um, what business do you have in Bilibin?" Janias asked, and Zeros looked at the boy strangely.

"What business is it of yours?" Zeros countered.

The boy looked a little confused.

"Hey, I just asked! I mean..."

"Travel," Zeros interrupted. "There, satisfied? I'm travelling around the globe, is that what you wanted to hear?"

Janias's mouth closed with a snap, then curved up.

"Yes."

"I hate you."

Zeros heard the boy out, as Janias told Zeros how he was trying to find his friends, who had vanished somehow. Zeros suspected that these 'friends', had simply left Janias alone.

'Ch, I can see why.'

Some talking (mostly by Janias) later, Janias left, and Zeros knew that he should too. Because he too, had someone important to find, and he knew that they hadn't abandoned him.

After leaving the Inn, he was about to leave, when he heard a girl crying. He turned around, and noticed a girl, sitting on a porch, clutching a broken doll. She had curly brown hair and light blue eyes. Zeros smiled sadly and walked over to the girl.

He bent down in front of her and said: "Hi there little girl."

The girl looked up, teary-eyed.

"Care to share your problem with me?" Zeros asked, leaning on one arm and the other resting on his knee.

The girl sniffed sadly and said: "My doll broke and I can't fix it! Mommy and daddy said I had to throw it away, but I got it from grandmama and it means a lot to me!"

She continued to cry, clutching the doll to her lithe body. Zeros sighed, and raked a hand through the girl's hair.

"Can I have a look at your doll? I might be able to fix it."

The girl had a hopeful glimmer in her eyes as she handed him the badly broken doll.

Zeros stood up so he could see better. With careful twists and turns, he started to maneuver the doll into its original shape. The girl continued to watch him as his hands continued to work on her doll.

After a few minutes, Zeros smiled, and lowered his hand. He slowly opened it, to reveal the girl's doll, looking better than ever. The girl gave a squeal of joy and grabbed her doll from Zeros's hand. The girl hugged the doll to her, and then hugged Zeros's leg, much to his surprise.

"Oh, thank you thank you thank you thank you!!" she kept repeating.

He finally pushed her aside and said: "Okay, okay, I get the point kid."

The kid was now smiling broadly, and she wiped the tears away from her eye. Zeros gazed up to check the time, and noticed it was around, 9:30.

He had to go, now.

Zeros looked down at the girl and said: "I need to ask your parents something, kid."

Rander reached Bilibin rather easily, though something was bothering him. Ever since he left Vault, he'd been wondering about Zeros. Rander had been one of the few people to meet him, and for Rander, that was a funny experience, seeing as he never had to look *that* far up to see one's face, and now he had to.

'If I ever meet him again that is,' he added.

He looked into an alley... and stopped dead.

"Speak of the devil," he muttered as he watched the guy, asking directions to Kolima.

When Zeros walked out of the alley, he noticed Rander, and a look of confusion crossed his face, until recognition shone brightly on his face.

"Oh, it's you again," Zeros said, and Rander detected a small hint of relief.

"You seem rather relieved, why's that?" Rander asked.

"Ch, I thought it was that Janias again, that kid won't leave me alone for some reason!" Zeros said, a little agitated by the looks of it.

Rander was a little confused.

"Who's this 'Jantias'?" he asked.

Zeros was about to open his mouth, when he looked up. Rander turned around, and immediately, his earlier question was answered.

"Him?" Rander asked.

"Yes, that's him."

Janias left the city, and Rander turned to Zeros.

"Where were you planning to go, Zeros?" he asked.

Zeros answered that he had to go to Fuchin Temple, and didn't know for sure which way Kolima was. Rander thought about that.

"I can see you're not really familiar around here, are you?" he asked.

Zeros shook his head and said: "Not really, I had already gotten lost in Goma Cave, so I suspect I'll be getting lost on my way to Kolima too."

Rander smirked, and said: "Maybe, maybe not."

Zeros raised a curious eyebrow at Rander, before realizing what he was trying to say.

Some time later, Zeros and Rander left Bilibin, and headed southeast to the place where Bilibin Barricade had been 60 years ago. By Zeros' request, Rander told him something about the barricade.

"There's an ancient tree in Kolima Forest called Tret, who had been hit with a Psynergy Stone, which caused his rage to become enormous. People tried to chop him down, and he changed them into trees, all of Kolima for that matter. The barricade was made to stop people from going to Kolima, until Isaac, Garet, Ivan and Mia stopped the evil in Tret, saving everyone in Kolima."

"By Sol..."

Rander, for one reason or another, had no trouble keeping up with Zeros, who was relatively taller than him. Zeros looked a little pissed off, but Rander let it slide. The battles weren't long, and the journey to Kolima was rather uneventful.

When they entered Kolima, Zeros looked around, looking a little confused.

'Probably because of all the houses,' Rander thought.

The houses were actually trees, which was quite odd if you weren't used to it. Rander had already been to Kolima, so he didn't think it was weird at all. As they walked through town, they heard some people talking about a girl named 'Onyx', and how the girl had left when she started 'seeing things'.

Rander tried to get some more information about this Onyx, but the people didn't feel like telling them. When one woman turned around however, blue spirals that started from the ground moved up to surround Zeros, and he staid like that. Rander was shocked that Zeros knew how to use Psynergy, but kept his yap shut. The spirals finally stopped and Zeros looked at Rander.

"This Onyx, she went to Fuchin Temple because she was afraid of the things she saw. Apparently, she could see small specks of the future," he said.

Rander was dumbfound, and said: "And you can read people's minds."

Zeros rolled his eyes and said: "Well, yes, because I happen to be a Jupiter Adept, thank you very much!"

Rander shut up almost instantly. He was a little confused, due to the fact that Zeros didn't really look like an Adept,

but like someone who was so tough, that he had never learned *how* to use Psynergy.

"I appreciate the comment, but if you don't mind, I'm going to try and get some more info on this 'Onyx'," Zeros said, and walked off.

It took Rander awhile to figure out what Zeros was talking about, but when he did, he cursed quietly, then went after him.

She sat there, shivering, though it was actually quite warm. She wanted protection, someone who could save her from the things she saw.

'Oh sure, a trip to Fuchin Temple makes it all go away! Yeah right!' she thought angrily.

Suddenly---

She cried out as pain surged through her head as a vision came to her.

She fell face-first on the ground, crying in pain. She looked up at the bandits that were all drawing their blades at her as she cried out for help.

"Leave that girl alone!!" a cold voice commanded.

One of the bandits turned, but it was too late for him.

"PLASMA!!!!"

Three of the bandits cried out as they were electrocuted. The others took their friends---and ran. She watched them run off, wondering what had just happened.

"You okay??"

She looked up, looking up at a rather tall man. He looked at her with worry on his face, and his voice... was awfully familiar.

*"Yeah..." she said, as she allowed him to pull her up.
"Thanks."*

The man smiled for a moment, then returned to a neutral face.

"Have we met? You look familiar," she said.

Panic darted through his eyes as he said: "I don't think so. This is my first visit to the east."

She watched the mountain for awhile, pondering what was going on. One delicate brown eyebrow was raised, and she blinked her icy blue eyes, while holding her fists on her hips.

The sash of her robe was untied, so it waved about in the wind. The large staff she carried along held a wondrous red gem at the end.

She blinked twice more, then asked aloud: "Funny, who would be stupid enough to steal from Sol Sanctum??"

She tapped her foot impatiently when no answer came.

With a howl of fury, the axe's blade sliced through the Spirit, as two blazing red eyes burned with rage. Zeros straightened, and whirled around to knock a Skeleton to the head with the flat of the blade. Rander watched with

fascination as Zeros killed every monster that dared to come near him, without receiving something as small as a scratch.

After the fight, Zeros was positioned in a crouch, one hand on the ground, while the other hovered somewhere above it, holding his axe. Zeros slowly stood up as his eyes reverted back to sapphire blue.

"Zeros, how did you do that?!" Rander asked, placing his sword away.

Zeros placed his axe away, and said: "Do what? All I did was fight."

Rander looked confused, until he smirked.

"Then you should enter in Colosso."

"Co... what??" Zeros asked, and Rander tumbled over in shock.

"You mean you don't know what Colosso is?!"

"No," Zeros said.

"Where have you been then?! Under a rock?!" Rander asked.

"Are you going to tell me what Colosso is, or not?" Zeros asked, avoiding Rander's question.

Rander simply huffed.

"Fine. Colosso is a large event that takes place once a year in Tolbi. It's at the end of the week, but I'm not sure if we can make it to Tolbi within 4 days."

Zeros nodded.

"Sounds good enough."

Rander looked rather confused, but Zeros continued on his way again, making Rander walk after him.

Zeros instantly felt a wave of strange energy flow over him when they entered the Fuchin Temple, and it made him slightly uneasy at first, until a calming voice told him to relax in the back of his mind. He sighed, and looked around, searching for something.

"Hey Rander." Rander looked up at Zeros. "I have an errand to run alright? It won't take long."

Without waiting for approval, Zeros ran off. Rander rolled his eyes, and decided to just walk around for awhile until Zeros came back.

He continued for awhile, until he found what he was looking for; a circle of 6 rocks with another in the middle.

Zeros smirked wickedly, and softly murmured: "Reveal."

Instantly, Zeros saw the chest standing there. He looked around, bent down, and opened the chest, getting out what he had left so many years ago. Carefully, he placed the sleeping critter inside his pouch, and walked away from the circle of stones and the chest that no one else could see.

A sudden cry of pain made him look around.

He gasped when he saw a girl with chin-length black hair that had a red tint to it, green eyes with red flecks and a pale complexion fall to the ground, surrounded by bandits.

The girl cried out for help as the bandits reached for their blades, and no one seemed to notice.

"Leave that girl alone!!" Zeros shouted, his voice turning ice-cold, like it did every time when he was angry.

One of the bandits turned around, but dark magenta waves had already surrounded Zeros as he focussed.

"PLASMA!!!!" he screamed, and lightning shot down from the sky, taking down three of the bandits with ease.

They fell and Zeros hissed: "Get away from her!"

The remaining bandits grabbed their fallen comrades, and ran. The girl looked after them in confusion. Zeros walked closer.

"You okay??" he asked, extending his hand to her.

The girl turned to look at him, and it was almost like she recognized him.

"Yeah..." she said, accepting his hand and standing up.
"Thanks."

Zeros smiled for a moment, then let it fall.

"Have we met? You look familiar," the girl said, and panic darted through Zeros' eyes.

"I don't think so," he said. "This is my first visit to the east."

Zeros studied what the girl was wearing and noticed that she wore black baggy guy's pants, a tight black tank top, a black cape, and black fingerless gloves.

The girl shrugged and then asked: "Who are you? My name's Onyx."

Zeros quirked an eyebrow at her.

"Oh, so you're that girl everyone's been talking about in Kolima."

Onyx blushed.

"They were?" she asked shyly.

"Indeed they were. I'm Zeros."

Onyx smiled up at him, a slight sparkle in her eye.

"Nice to meet you."

Zeros nodded and asked: "Just a question, do you have 'strange powers', besides 'seeing things'?"

Onyx looked sad and said: "I sometimes look at people, and hear them talking while they don't. It freaks me out!"

Zeros simply smiled and said: "Thought so. Just to tell you this kid, you're not the only one that can read one's mind."

Onyx looked horrified, but blue spirals swirled around Zeros as a small beam connected their foreheads together.

When the spirals stopped, Zeros said: "Okay, your favorite color is black, you left Kolima because your visions scared the living daylights out of you, and your father died last year."

He looked at Onyx with a smirk on his face as the girl gawked at him.

"How did you know that?!" she asked.

"Told you I was a mind reader."

"Wicked!"

The two calmly strode through the city as they had decided to meet with Rander.

"So Onyx, you handle a scythe, right? Exactly how good are you at that?" Zeros asked.

Onyx moved her cape a little aside to reveal a rather large scythe, and Zeros smiled.

"I guess I can beat most enemies. But I don't think I'll be able to enter in Colosso even if I wanted to," Onyx answered.

Zeros sighed.

"Why is everyone talking about this 'Colosso'? What's so special about it anyway?!" he asked aloud.

Onyx looked shocked.

"You're not excited about it?!"

"Why should I be? A few games, some fighting, and that's about everything that's really fun!"

Onyx stopped for a moment.

"Fun?! *Fun*?! You think fighting's just fun!?"

Zeros didn't answer, but it was almost as if he was recalling memories. Onyx, curious as to what he was thinking, used Mindread on him (Zeros had quickly taught her how to do that).

But, all she heard was: *'Onyx, stop tampering with my mind.'*

She immediately stopped, shocked.

"Mental Block," Zeros muttered. "Keeps unwanted mind readers out."

'And keeps me from going mad,' he added in his mind.

As they approached the gate, they could see Rander leaning against one of the beams, arms folded and his face contorted in a scowl. He looked up, not showing any sign of that he was getting impatient, or was confused by Onyx.

"Who's she?" Rander asked.

"Rander, this is Onyx, Onyx, this is Rander," Zeros stated calmly.

Rander nodded at Onyx, who gave a shy nod back. After getting, acquainted, the trio discussed a few things.

"So, Onyx, what are you planning to do anyway?" Zeros asked, obviously having learned only some facts about Onyx.

Zeros didn't read Onyx's mind again, because she knew that he knew that it freaked her out.

"I don't know. I had wanted to go see Colosso, but I don't think I'd make it, and I don't want to waste the journey to Tolbi just to find Colosso over and done with."

Zeros looked up, and checked the time.

"Well, if we hurry, we might be able to make it to Tolbi," he mumbled.

Onyx looked confused, until she smiled.

"Can I go with you?!" she asked pleadingly.

Zeros smiled at her and said: "I never said you couldn't, now did I?"

Before Zeros knew what happened, he was being hugged by Onyx.

"Thank you! Thank you thank you thank you!!" she cried.

Rander sweatdropped, but Zeros allowed the girl for awhile.

"I get the picture, Onyx."

Onyx released him, and smiled.

"If you give me a second, I need to get Gust!" she said, and ran off.

"Gust??" the two males asked aloud.

"GUST!!" Onyx yelled, and a few moments later, a Jupiter Djinni hopped over to her.

"Yeah, Onyx, what is it?" the Djinni asked.

"We're going to Tolbi!" Onyx said, excited.

"We are?! WIPPEE!!!" Gust cheered, and jumped in Onyx's pouch.

Onyx grabbed a few more things of her own from her house, then ran back to Zeros and Rander.

"Okay I'm ready!"

After Onyx said good-bye to Master Nyunpa, and received the Orb Of Force, the trio left the Fuchin Temple, heading for the forest south of the temple.

Mogal Forest.

Upon entry, Zeros stopped. Someone was there, he could feel it.

"What is it, Zeros?" Onyx asked.

Zeros didn't respond. He got the Orb Of Force from his pouch, and focussed his Psynergy.

"Force!" he said, and a sea-through fist shot toward the bushes, and by the sound of it, it hit somebody. A yelp of pain and surprise was heard, and by the sound of it, it was female.

Out of the bushes, stepped a sixteen-year-old girl of around 5'7, with light aqua green hair, and brown eyes. She wore a lime colored long sleeve shirt, black chain mail pants, had a rock helmet on her cranium and wore some Seven-League boots. She looked rather angry, and her eyes became a steely blue color, and a cleric's necklace hung around her neck.

"Jerk! What was that for?!" she demanded.

Zeros didn't respond.

"Hey! Who are you?! And why were you following us?!" Onyx asked angrily.

"I wasn't following anybody!!" the girl shouted angrily, grabbing a rod from her back.

"And you'd be better off staying away!"

Zeros growled and reached one hand behind him, slowly, as he placed the Orb Of Force in his pouch.

"Yeah right, as if!" Rander said sarcastically. "You wouldn't be able to last 5 minutes against us. I highly doubt you'd be able to win."

"WHY YOU!!" the girl screamed and lunged at Rander with her rod in position.

Rander grabbed his sword and raced forward too. Their weapons clashed with a loud clang.

On impulse, Onyx grabbed her scythe within a second, and raced toward the unfamiliar girl. Rander swung at the girl's head, who dodged, and then jumped aside to avoid getting sliced by Onyx's scythe. The blade of the scythe cut a nearby tree in half, making Rander blink.

"Whoa, that thing's sharp," he said.

"Thank you!" Onyx said with a smile.

It was that moment, that Zeros decided to join the battle, his eyes blazing red with untamed fury. With his axe in both hands, he ran toward the unfamiliar girl, and the girl ran at him, but he jumped aside before she could reach him.

The girl whirled around to face him in anger, and shouted, as blue spirals circled her: "FROST!!!"

A sudden chill ran over Rander, Onyx and Zeros, and they all shivered, but Zeros growled angrily.

The girl got ready to race at him again, when her rod let out a howl.

"LEECH ONSLAUGHT!!" she screamed.

Zeros couldn't avoid her, and received the girl's rod against his stomach and face, having a large part of his health extracted, and was knocked him into a tree, which broke on impact.

"ZEROS!!!" Onyx and Rander shouted, but no response came from the now motionless body.

Rander growled angrily, and golden spirals circled him, and formed a small critter, which vanished in his sword.

He raced toward the girl, shouting: "LOAM!!!!"

Rander seemed to vanish, only to make place for a large horse, which crashed right into the strange girl. Rander soon landed on the place he'd been before, smirking wickedly. Onyx smiled too, and was about to summon Gust, when a seizure took a hold of her, and made her pass out with a small scream.

They were walking through a forest, searching for something. Onyx was accompanied by a strange cat-like woman. The woman wasn't exactly cat-like, but the way she walked made her think that.

She had black hair that came to her waist, was about 6'5, had two braids in her hair in a vertical line on her scalp, and searched the area with red eyes. Her ears were pointed, indicating that she belonged to the Fire Clan Of The North. She wore red pants with a black skirt attached, a red shirt with the bottom pulled though the top to make a tank top out of it, wore red clawed gloves with the fingers cut off, wore red heels, but had the heels cut off, making her walk on the front part of her feet. She also carried a bag around her waist.

"Where is he?" the woman asked herself. "Where is he!?"

They searched, and searched, trying to locate somebody, yet Onyx didn't know whom. After awhile, they met up with a whole gang of people. Most of them were unfamiliar to Onyx, but Rander was among the group as well, so they couldn't be the enemy. But... where was Zeros??

"Now where do we go?" a brown haired boy of around 6'2 asked. "Eve, did you find anything?"

He turned to a blue haired girl.

"Sorry Brett, but I didn't. Erica and me searched everywhere, we couldn't find him."

"You... you don't suppose he's..." a brown haired girl with one whopper of a staff started.

"I don't think so," a new voice said.

From the bushes, stepped a 15-year-old boy with golden hair and eyes, which were scrunched down into a frown. "If I know him, he's still out there, but too weak to call out for help."

"You sure?" the cat-like woman asked.

The boy nodded.

"Well, can we drink something first? I'm kinda thirsty," a purple haired girl asked.

And so, they walked toward a river, but there, they received a large shock. Because through the river, flowed another river, but this one was different...

It was red... it was blood...

A boy with flaming red hair mumbled: "Oh shit..."

Onyx shot up with a choked scream, and instantly tried to calm herself. She kept a hand on her heart to calm it, and tried to even her breathing, before dropping back on the bed.

'Bed!?!?'

Onyx shot up again and looked around. She was in some sort of room... like that of a...

"Evening," a familiar voice said, and when Onyx turned her head, she saw Zeros standing in the doorway.

"How are you feeling?" he asked.

"I'm alright I guess," Onyx said as Zeros walked over. "What happened? Where are we?"

"We're in Xian, you passed out during the battle with Lira and I had to carry you all the way here."

"Lira?? OH! You mean that girl we battled?"

Zeros nodded.

"You gave me quite a scare there Onyx, what happened?"

"I... I had another vision," Onyx said, hanging her head.

Zeros noticed the sudden depression and changed the subject.

"Anyway, Rander's paying a visit to Master Feh's MA school, with the Orb Of Force. Wouldn't know why."

Onyx looked up, confused.

"What time is it?" Zeros blinked, then walked to the window to look outside. His eyes squinted as he leaned on the window-frame, staring up in the sky.

"Well, I'd say... 10:30 in the evening," Zeros finally muttered.

"WHAT?! By Luna!! How long did I sleep!?" Onyx asked, jumping out of bed.

Zeros turned around, glad that Onyx still wore her clothes, besides her cape.

"A long time," Zeros mumbled, turning around and leaning against the windowsill.

That's about the point that Rander came in.

"Oh, I see you're a awake," he said.

Onyx nodded as she picked up her cape, scythe and pouch from the nightstand beside the bed.

"Hey Zeros, I still want to know how you did that!" Rander said, turning his attention to the silver haired man.

Zeros blinked.

"Did what?! I already told you! All I do is fight!" he said.

Onyx looked confused.

"What happened then?" she asked Rander.

"Oh by Luna, you should've seen him Onyx! You won't believe this!"

Zeros dodged Lira yet again, looking rather pissed off. Lira made another attempt to hit Zeros with her rod, but he easily grabbed the rod in his hand. She gasped, and gave a yelp as Zeros grabbed the rod with both his hands, and swirling her around, before letting her fly into a tree herself.

"Why you!!" Lira growled, and her rod gave another howl.

"LEECH ONSLAUGHT!!!" she screamed again, and raced at Zeros again.

But his axe blocked her.

Suddenly, it was Zeros's weapon that gave a howl. Ultimate dark magenta swirls circled around him, then centered in the gem that formed the pommelstone of the axe, making it glow with an ultra magenta glow that shaded everything in the same aura.

"Grrrr! Take this!! REIGN OF JUPITER!!!!" Zeros screamed, and aimed the pommelstone at Lira.

The beam that shot forth from it was enormous, and could not be avoided, not by a long shot.

Onyx looked at Zeros in shock, who didn't even seem affected. He looked like he couldn't care.

"It's not such a big deal," Zeros mumbled.

"No big deal?!" Onyx asked. "You could beat everyone in Colosso with a move like that!"

"Colosso, Colosso. What's so special about it?!" Zeros demanded.

Rander looked a little confused.

"Well, people intend to either make a lot of money or become famous fighters! Isn't that what everyone wants?!" Onyx demanded.

"For your information! / for one, do *NOT* enjoy being famous or rich! What's so important about fame and fortune anyway!? It doesn't buy you friendship!" Zeros screamed, then raced out of the room, not to be seen for a long time.

Onyx lay in bed as the moon shone, but the seizures kept her awake, and somehow, she managed not to scream.

The tall man grunted as the woman elbowed him in the stomach, but he quickly grabbed her arm and swung her away. The battle went on and on, until she managed to lead him to a ridge. When he felt air beneath his heel, he looked down quickly, before turning around again. But it was too

late. Her fist connected with his chin, which made a sick cracking sound, and he was sent flying...

Onyx shot up, and quickly covered her mouth with her hand to prevent a scream from coming from her mouth. She had a terrible feeling of déjà vu, and that was something she didn't like. After calming down, she just sat there, wondering where Zeros was right now. The only sound in the room, was her breathing, which was even again.

Suddenly, she heard a strange squeaky voice say: "So, what are we going to do now?"

"I had hoped they were at Fuchin Temple, looks like I was wrong," a very familiar voice said.

"You don't start crying! If you do I'll cry too and I don't wanna!"

A sigh was heard.

"I know."

"Hey! I know!" the squeaky voice said, and some soft whispering was heard.

When Onyx couldn't hear anything anymore, she snuggled under the covers, and tumbled asleep.

Rander and Onyx found themselves walking down the stairs, both upon hearing fighting going on outside. They walked outside, and noticed a lot of people from Master Feh's MA school fighting each other, trying to best each other. Most matches were rather one-sided though. There was someone else watching the matches as well.

"Hi Zeros," Onyx said, hoping he'd forgotten about last night.

Unfortunately, he didn't forget.

"What took you two so long?" he asked with a cold voice that was void of any emotion.

Rander gulped silently, and Onyx shuffled a little with her feet.

"I... I'm really sorry about last night..." Onyx started, but was rudely cut off.

"Forget it, let's go already!" Zeros commanded, and stalked off, leaving them to catch up to him.

Rander instantly noticed that Zeros was walking a lot faster than usual. He didn't know why, but Rander knew that Zeros was still mad at them, because his eyes were now a dark ruby-red hue.

The battles were fairly easy, and spent in utter silence. Zeros refused to speak to either of them as they continued on their way.

Zeros cleaned his axe on a nearby bush in Alpine Crossing, where they were now, and Onyx watched him as he placed it away. Rander sheathed his sword, not really bothering to clean the blood off of it. After a few more minutes, Onyx finally opened her mouth.

"Zeros..."

Zeros didn't seem to listen, but Onyx continued anyway.

"Look, I'm really sorry about what I said, okay?"

No response.

"Zeros... please, forgive me?"

No response for awhile, until Zeros's head turned, and Onyx smiled, because he was smiling, and his eyes were sapphire blue again.

He turned and said: "Hey, that's what friends are for, right?"

They continued on, entering the Lama Temple, which held an almost similar air as Fuchin Temple, only different. Zeros was looking around, as if searching for someone. Onyx looked around in awe, amazed by the size of the Temple.

"Hey Zeros, can I look around for awhile?" she asked.

Zeros looked at her.

"Sure, go ahead," he said.

"Come on Rander! Let's go!!" Onyx said, and started to pull Rander along, who was forced to comply.

Zeros chuckled, and walked off.

Onyx looked on in awe, enjoying the view, while Rander silently tagged along. He knew that if he resisted, Onyx would continue to pull him along anyway, so it didn't matter too much. They continued their sightseeing for some time, before they decided to search for Zeros. This however, proved to be a very difficult task.

Zeros might be tall, but he was nowhere to be seen, as if he had left without them.

"Where is he?" Onyx finally dared to ask.

"I wouldn't know."

Rander looked around, confused.

"You don't think he'd leave us? Do you?" Onyx asked, lightly scared.

"It's a possibility, but I can't say for sure," Rander answered.

Onyx's face fell, and she looked like she was ready to cry.

"Why would Zeros leave without us? I thought we made up..." she said, sniffing lightly.

Onyx's words reached the ears of another girl, who had been searching too, and she turned around, holding the large staff in her hand.

'A girl dressed in black, a guy shorter than me... that *HAS* to be them!' she thought and walked over.

"Excuse me," she said, and the two turned to her in confusion.

The girl had waist-length brown hair with a red bow in it, a braid and had icy blue eyes. She wore yellow shorts, a white robe with red triangles on the trims, a loose yellow tank top and light brown sandals.

"Are you Onyx and Rander, by any chance?" she asked.

Onyx gaped.

"How... how did you?!" Rander started.

"Doesn't matter for now, my name's Sara, and Master Feizhi asked me to look for you," the girl named Sara said.

Onyx and Rander looked at each other, shrugged, and followed Sara.

They came at some sort of temple, only this one was bigger and more fancy than the others that were surrounding it. Onyx was reminded of the Fuchin Temple, but remained silent. Rander had heard of Master Feizhi, and knew that she was good, I mean, *real* good! He had never seen her, so this would probably be his first time.

The trio entered the temple, and instantly noticed the still young looking Feizhi, with long, wavy purple hair, and clear magenta eyes. Feizhi was already over seventy, but still looked as beautiful as ever, if not more beautiful.

Feizhi smiled as the three of them entered, and said: "I knew you two would come, sooner or later. I haven't been wrong with anything so far."

Rander didn't bother, but it sort of freaked Onyx out.

"I had been wanting to talk to both of you in private, for I have a special message for both of you. Rander, will you follow me?"

Feizhi walked into a chamber at the end of the room, and Rander shrugged, before walking in.

Onyx waited, unsure of what was going on in there.

Sara shifted the large staff she had to her other shoulder and said: "So, you are an Adept?"

Onyx looked confused, before she remembered that Zeros had said, that she was a Jupiter Adept, like he himself was.

"Yeah, Jupiter."

Sara smiled broadly.

"What a coincidence! I'm a Jupiter Adept too!" she said.

Onyx smiled too.

"You are?!"

"Yeah!"

After a few minutes of talking, Rander walked out of the chamber.

"Hey Onyx! You're up!" he said.

Onyx nodded and walked into the chamber.

Onyx instantly noticed that the room was decorated with black, red, and purple, which gave the room an eerie atmosphere. On the altar stood a picture-frame, with a picture of a young girl, but the colors had faded over the years. The child was an innocent one, easy to tell, but she looked incredibly shy.

A sudden pain in her head made Onyx wince as she grasped her head with one hand.

"MAMA!!! PAPA!!!" a child's voice cried out, and tears were evident in her voice.

A young girl by the age of 5 ran toward a place where painful screams were heard. When she got there... she stopped...

"MAMA! PAPA! NOOOOOOOOOO!!!!!"

"Onyx," a gentle voice said, and Onyx lifted her head to look at Feizhi. "Is something wrong?"

Onyx removed her hand and said: "Not really. Who's that girl?"

Onyx pointed at the picture, and Feizhi looked at the frame.

"Oh, her. She was a young girl I met in Vale. I had gone there to see the wonders of Sol Sanctum. Being a Master here in Lama Temple, allows me to view it. The child was so innocent, she knew nothing of what had happened in Sol Sanctum 60 years ago, and her parents didn't want her to know. They said it was for the best. I agreed on that one."

"Was she an only child?" Onyx asked.

"No, she had another sibling, but she had died at the age of four. Her sibling was 5 years older, if she had been alive."

"What happened to her?" Onyx was curious, she couldn't help it.

Feizhi hung her head.

"I knew what would happen, but a little too late. I could never forgive myself for that day."

"What?! What happened?!" Onyx asked, scared.

"She was killed..."

Onyx would've paled, if she hadn't been naturally pale already.

"A monster killed her, and her parents with it. Some of the village elders say that the girl's spirit still searches those of her parents, whom she can't find. I left Vale a week later, after the burial, and returned to Lama Temple. I knew I could never forgive myself for what happened that day."

Onyx lowered her head.

"I'm sorry."

"It's not your fault."

Feizhi took a deep breath, and said: "Anyway, I wanted to talk with you about something you've seen."

Onyx's eyes widened.

"You had a vision, about going to a stream, and finding blood. Has the vision continued?"

Onyx shook her head.

"All those people... I didn't know them... but... Sara..... she was with us! And... Zeros... he wasn't..... he wasn't there..."

Feizhi nodded.

"It could be that Zeros had been still searching, and would join you after you went up the stream, or found whoever you'd been looking for."

Onyx smiled.

"Hey yeah! Of course! Zeros is too tough to be beaten that easily!" Onyx said holding up her fists. "He won't die! I know

he won't!"

Feizhi smiled.

"Now, you could ask Sara if she'd want to join you, but Zeros has to give his approval."

"Yeah!" Onyx said, and ran out of the chamber.

Once Onyx was gone, Feizhi's smile vanished, and she hung her head. Someone stepped out of the shadow and placed a firm but gentle hand on her shoulder. Feizhi sniffed, and looked up into his sapphire blue eyes.

"You have to brave, I'll be fine."

Feizhi nodded.

"Then you have to survive, you *must*! Promise me Zeros!"

Zeros nodded and held his old friend's hand.

"I'll make it through this. I promise."

The trio now walked through the streets of the Lama Temple, hoping to catch a glimpse of Zeros, but finding none.

"How exactly do we find this Zeros?" Sara asked, switching her staff onto her other shoulder.

"Well, he's mighty tall, he has silver hair, so, it's not *that* hard to find him," Rander said.

"I agree on that one," a familiar voice said, and the three of them turned around.

"Where were you two? I've been looking all over for you!" Zeros replied a little angry, walking over.

"Sorry Zeros, but Master Feizhi had wanted to see us. Oh, and this is Sara," Onyx said. "Sara, this is Zeros."

Sara smiled and Zeros seemed to calm down. The two shook hands.

"Zeros, would it be alright if Sara went with us?" Onyx asked.

Zeros looked at her, lightly confused.

It soon faded and her said: "I don't see why not."

The sun had been murderous today already, well, now it was even worse!

Zeros pulled the teat of with his teeth and poured some of the water over Onyx's head, who was the worst of all them. Because black colors absorb thrice as much heat as white clothing, which made it truly unbearable for the young girl. Rander and Sara were doing fine, and Zeros was doing relatively well too, but Onyx was burning up.

Rander wiped the sweat from his brow as Zeros put the teat back on the waterskin he carried along.

"Danged heat!" he mumbled.

Yeah, well, I wouldn't want to be in the Lamakan Desert either. Sara was leaning on her staff, panting slightly.

"This is great... we're in the middle of a desert, and the water will run low if we keep using it on Onyx!"

"Rander, calm down. I know where we're going alright?" Zeros said, and placed his waterskin away.

"Now that's a first."

"I'm serious. And by the way, if you stay on the spot you are now, you'll get a little soaked."

Rander looked down at the sand he was standing on. Cautiously, Rander took a few steps back, still not comprehending what Zeros meant. Sara looked at Zeros with wonder, and then looked at the circle of six rocks that Rander had been standing in.

"You mean that you can use..." Sara started, when she was interrupted.

"REVEAL!!!" Zeros shouted as blue spirals circled around him, the world hid in darkness, and a section was displayed... with in the center an oasis!

Rander looked shocked, and Onyx looked at the crystal clear water in wonder. Sara was looking at Zeros, who had moved over to the water, and was refilling the waterskin. The others finally calmed down and walked over to drink.

The water was remarkably sweet, and they couldn't get enough, but Zeros told them that they had to save some for other travelers. It made them laugh, and they continued on, with new courage.

They were a little soaked, so that they could last at least a *little* longer in the heat of the Lamakan Desert. They came to another circle of six rocks, but Zeros didn't use Reveal right away, which usually meant that this wasn't an oasis. They

had had that before, and had to face an AntLion, which they didn't want again.

"REVEAL!!!" Zeros finally screamed.

As they looked in the center of the circle, they nearly dropped their weapons.

There, sat a small white critter with beady golden eyes, a golden tail, a silver underbelly, and small arms and legs. They instantly knew it was a Djinni... but... the question was... what kind of Djinni?

It looked up, and noticed them.

It looked over all of them, and lingered on Zeros.

"Who are you people??" the Djinni asked.

"Uh... I'm Onyx, and these are Sara, Rander, and Zeros."

The Djinni nodded.

"I see. Well, I'm Shine, a Saturn Djinni, nice to meet you all."

"*Saturn?!?!!*" Sara, Rander and Onyx said at the same time.

"By Sol! I knew of Jupiter, Mercury, Venus and Mars Djinnis, but I've never heard of *Saturn* Djinnis before!" Sara said, confused.

"Yeah, well, us Saturn Djinnis only come out in time of desperate need. We were all born in Luna Sanctum, on the other side of the planet, 20 years ago. Unfortunately, that's also where the Uranus Djinnis come from. Uranus Djinnis are incredibly dangerous, and shouldn't be used at all."

Shine gave a sigh.

"Sad, I'm the only one in this desert. I'm hungry, I'm thirsty, and I WANT TO GET OUT OF HERE!!!" the Djinni screamed.

Zeros, who had remained ultimately calm during it all, finally spoke.

"Then come with us."

Shine looked up in shock.

"Y-you mean it?!"

Zeros nodded.

"YEEEEEEEEESS!! ALL RIGHT!!!"

Shine hollered in joy. It let out a howl, and dissipated into numerous flashes of bright light, which touched the place where Zeros's heart resided.

Onyx looked up at Zeros, who didn't seem shocked at all.

"Well, let's go," Zeros finally said, as he began to walk again.

The others soon followed, silently.

It was red... it was blood...

A boy with flaming red hair mumbled: "Oh shit..."

Slowly, they all walked up the stream, watching the large stream of blood. Onyx began to grow scared. She hoped Zeros would walk up to them, and fast, for she was fearing he wasn't going to.

The golden haired boy pushed some leaves aside... and gasped audibly. The cat-like woman blinked, and looked too. She stumbled back, eyes as wide as saucers.

"No! That... that can't be...!"

Onyx almost couldn't look, but she moved closer.

"NOOOOOOOOOO!!!!" Onyx screamed as she shot up in bed.

She looked around, scared. Sara lit a candle and looked at Onyx.

"Onyx! What happened?!" she asked.

"Nothing... just... just a..." Onyx started, but decided to drop it. "Never mind... G'night," she said, and snuggled into her bed.

Sara looked confused. She finally shrugged, but instead of going back asleep, she went downstairs.

They were in Kalay, after leaving the Lamakan Desert behind them. Rander had captured another Venus Djinni, and afterwards, they went to the Inn to rest up for the night. They had partially forgotten about Shine, but Zeros didn't want to talk about it. Sara arrived downstairs, and stopped in her tracks.

"Zeros! What are you doing up at this time of night?!"

Zeros looked up from where he was sitting, gazing out the window, to look at her briefly, and returning to his stargazing.

"Nothing," Zeros murmured, but something was different about his voice.

It took Sara some time, but when she realized, she felt pity for Zeros. He felt sad, although she still had to figure out why.

"Do you want to talk about it?" Sara asked.

"There's nothing to talk about," Zeros said softly.

Sara walked over, and sat down in front of Zeros, who looked at her with those sapphire blue eyes. She looked closely, and noticed the amount of pain in them. So much pain, that it was remarkable that he hadn't broken down yet. There was something in his past that he wanted to forget, but couldn't.

Sara laid one of her hands on that of Zeros, who looked at it, confused. His gaze moved to hers, and she kept a neutral face, trying to look neither happy nor sad.

"Most of the times, if you talk about things, they heal faster. They won't heal if you keep it bottled up."

Zeros seemed to mull over her words, but remained silent.

Sara was about to open her mouth, when she was cut off.

"I lost my family..."

Sara's eyes widened.

"What?!"

"I lost my sister... my parents... and I don't even remember if I had any other family..."

"Then... how did you survive?" Sara asked, carefully holding Zeros's hand, like it was porcelain.

"I can't remember... I forgot my age as the years passed... it's not that important anyway..."

Sara looked utterly shocked, and Zeros wouldn't look at her.

"I still remember my parents though... I learned that I had a sister much later... I never knew her though..."

Zeros sighed.

"That must be horrible... I pity you... really I do..." Sara said.

Zeros looked at her, then lowered his head.

"I appreciate that you care," Zeros said, and pried Sara's hand loose from his own, "but I don't enjoy being pitied. By nobody."

Zeros stood up, and left the Inn, and Sara could've sworn she saw a small crystalline droplet run down his cheek.

Morning came rather quickly, but Zeros was nowhere to be seen. Sara, Onyx and Rander searched the city, but nothing. Sara felt a little guilty, for she felt that this was all her fault. However...

As they arrived at the docks, they instantly noticed Zeros watching the water. His cape was billowing around him, and a gently breeze ruffled his hair. He turned around to face them, then turned back to the water. All the pain from last night seemed to have been washed away by the gentle breeze of the wind and the sound of the waves.

"Hey, you okay?" Onyx asked.

"Yeah, I'm fine, thanks for asking."

Sara was silent for awhile. He was acting like last night never happened. Maybe it was even better that way.

"You know," Onyx suddenly said. "I never thought we'd make it to Tolbi in time. I mean, Colosso is tomorrow, and we can still get there on time!"

Zeros turned and smiled.

"Then we should get on the boat," Zeros said, and almost everyone's jaw dropped.

"You mean... that you..." Sara started, and then she noticed that Zeros had pulled out four tickets.

"Zeros, why did you...?" Onyx started, but Zeros shook his head.

"Doesn't matter, let's just go."

"No....." the child murmured. "Mama..... Papa..... Sissy..... No..... Don't leave me all alone..... Please....."

Tears fell down the child's face, as it continued to cry, grasping the blood red axe in one hand.

"No....."

The child's voice sounded again and again. Softer. Softer... until no more sound came...

Zeros watched the water as he stood at the starboard side of the ship. He could still remember that day. They were gone... he still couldn't believe it. But somehow, he knew they were still alive. That they still lived, wondering where he was, when he'd come home, what he's been through.

He glanced back at his friends, who were each doing their own things.

Rander was finally cleaning his sword, wiping bloodstains from it. Onyx was talking to Sara, both of them laughing every now and then.

Zeros turned away. It had been so long since he'd been with other people. He hardly talked, making his voice hoarse, but no one seemed to bother. Talking hurt his throat, and he thought he'd be better off not talking at all.

Strange though...

He seemed to feel rather comfortable when he was around other Jupiter Adepts. He had no idea why that was.

"LAND HO!!!" one of the sailors suddenly shouted, and Zeros looked up.

"Already??" he heard Rander say.

"Whoa, that was fast!" Onyx said.

Zeros looked up. It was near the late afternoon. Those three had been so busy, that they didn't realize half a day had come and gone.

As they left the boat, they headed straight for Tolbi, noticing that there were a lot of people coming to see Colosso, and some looked like they were planning to enter. Zeros had

decided to join as well, he needed some fighting to ease his troubled mind. Fighting had been the only thing keeping him from going insane from the loss of his family.

The Mental Block he had created around his mind was also destined to keep his troubled thoughts out. What strengthened this barrier, was fighting. Zeros banished most other thoughts from his mind as they entered Tolbi.

"Wow! I can't believe I'm in Tolbi! This is amazing!!" Onyx said, ecstatic.

"Hey, chill out. What's the deal? It's just a city!" Zeros said, turning to Onyx.

"How can you be so calm?! We're in Tolbi! Where the oldest man in the world lives! Doesn't that excite you in the least!?" Sara asked.

Zeros sweat dropped.

"Babi? What about him?" Rander said, his arms crossed over his chest. "He's just some old geezer who wants to live forever. Big deal."

Zeros nodded and said: "I agree on that one. If you wish to grow old, don't slow the aging process, but make it count until it's over."

Did anyone notice that this is the same ending as the last chapter, only with the names? Well, not much new characters, but there *was* a small spoiler of the ending. Can anyone guess what's going to happen? Please don't review if you do, you might spoil it for those who don't know.

The Saturn and Uranus Djinnis are new, but don't worry, it'll be explained later on. Or, if you can't wait with it, read the story "A Warrior Named Zealot". It's not mine, but the author of that story, gave me permission to use two of his characters. Good story! Really.

New Characters that have been named:

Janias Silvermoon

Lira

Onyx

Sara

***Chapter 6*: Chapter 4: Colosso**

Chapter 4; Colosso

His horse gratefully ate his portion of hay, while he kept pondering about what that guy had said.

'If you wish to grow old, don't slow the aging process, but make it count until it's over. How'd he come up with that?' he wondered as he left the stables.

As he got out of the stables, he went to the Inn, to meet up with a certain somebody.

He calmly strode over to the table, where the very same man sat. The man looked up.

"Oh, hi Zealot, what took you?" the man asked.

"Oh shut up Scott, I was a little too tied up to go anywhere!" Zealot said angrily as his golden eyes sparkled angrily behind his hood.

The scar on his face, was one of the many scars he had.

Zealot had been named after his father, whom he'd seen only once, as a spirit, when he had faced Kai. His parents had been killed after he'd been born, by none other than Kai. Zealot had been raised by a Venus Djinni, which was rather hard to believe for some people. But Canyon had never left Zealot, and staid with him to give him advice.

Zealot had a special gift, something he rarely used.

He could sense the Elemental Stars. He had sensed the disappearance of the Jupiter Star, but it had vanished, rather

fast. It was either destroyed, or someone was using some sort of veil over the Star to keep it undetected. The last option was out, that's for sure. Zealot had yet to face someone with a power so great. Still, the woman that Kai had been talking to, Ema-something, kept talking about a woman, who had the Jupiter Star. Zealot didn't really understand what the woman meant, but it wasn't important, for now.

"Huh?? What happened then??" Scott asked.

"It was as I expected. Kai's behind this, but this time, he's not alone, and there are *two* Uranus Adepts this time," Zealot said, keeping his cool as he sat down.

"What?!?!" Scott asked, eyes as wide as saucers. "B-b-but how..."

"I don't know okay? In any case, it's going to be..."

Zealot stopped as he heard something that caught his attention.

"What?" Scott asked, but Zealot shushed him.

"I still wonder what Shine meant with Saturn and Uranus Djinnis. I mean, where do they come from?" Sara asked, drinking some soda through a straw.

"Luna Sanctum, remember? He said so himself," Zeros mumbled, taking a swig of his drink.

"Smart guy," Rander said, and placed his empty mug on the table. "Well, then where is this Luna Sanctum then? Hmmm?"

"How should I know?! I've never been there before, have you?"

Rander was silent.

Onyx suddenly noticed a boy on a different table, looking at them from under a hood. She noticed the boy's golden eyes, and the boy hurriedly looked away, as if trying to show he wasn't looking at them. Onyx felt a headache come up, and it hurt.

"Onyx?" Zeros asked. "You alright?"

"Yeah, just a headache, that's all," Onyx said.

Brett, Eve, Erica and Anthony entered the huge city, and were impressed by the size of it.

"Wow! This is one big town!" Eve said in admiration.

Anthony didn't really bother, he'd been to Tolbi with his father before, yet never during Colosso.

"However, there's still one problem," Brett said.

Erica nodded.

"How are we supposed to enter in Colosso?"

It was that particular moment, that Zealot decided to show himself, while walking out of the Inn. Erica spotted him first, and gasped.

"You?!" she demanded, and Zealot looked up, a little confused, until he saw who was with the purple haired girl.

Brett growled angrily.

"Who are you?! And why in Sol's name did you leave without apologizing to Eve for what you almost did?!" he demanded.

Zealot didn't respond at first, then said, while crossing his arms over his chest: "Hey, no one's been killed. You should be happy about that."

Anthony bared his teeth in anger, and was about to retort, when a smooth feminine voice said: "Hola, hola, hola! Save the fightin' for Colosso will ya?!"

They looked toward the source of the voice, which was a woman of around 16, by the way she looked, but her eyes spoke of wisdom beyond her years.

She had black hair that came to her waist, was about 6'5, had two braids in her hair in a vertical line on her scalp, and had a pair of scorching red eyes. Her ears were sharply pointed, indicating that she belonged to the Fire Clan Of The North. She wore red pants with a black skirt attached, a red shirt with the bottom pulled through the top to make a tank top out of it, wore red clawed gloves with the fingers cut off, and red heels with the heels cut off, making her walk on the frontal part of her feet. Around her waist, was a bag.

"It's what Colosso's for, right?" she asked.

Brett looked confused, and asked: "Why do you even intervene?!"

"Just trying to prevent a fight alrigh?" the woman said, then added, "Those are for Colosso."

Zealot rolled his eyes and said: "Is that the only thing you think of, Cecilia?!"

"It's the only thing you can think of, Zealot!" the woman, obviously named Cecilia, said.

Zealot snorted, and walked off.

"You shouldn't bother with Zealot, he's cold on the outside, but he can care for people if he wants to."

Eve looked at Cecilia, and asked: "Why did you help us, Miss... Cecilia, was it?"

Cecilia nodded and said: "Yep, that's me name! And I told you why I helped. The fights are for Colosso, not for on the street!"

Erica looked confused, and looked at the retreating form of Zealot.

"Who was that guy anyway?"

"That was Zealot. He's an okay guy when he wants to be, which isn't often. Doesn't really talk about his past. Anyway, you gonna enter in Colosso or not?" Cecilia asked.

Brett and Anthony exchanged glances, and Brett said: "If we can get in, we would, but we're probably not old enough."

Cecilia looked confused, then smiled, and said: "Not to worry, I know Babi mighty well, I might be able to get you guys into Colosso."

The four of them accepted Cecilia's offer, and she left to Babi's palace.

Brett looked around his friends, and wondered if they could all enter Colosso. They'd have to fight alone though, which

was something they weren't quite used to. Well, Anthony probably was, but, Erica, Eve, and himself, mostly fought together, instead of alone.

Eve and Erica were waiting anxiously for Cecilia to return to them, while Anthony was looking out the window, watching the people walk about, when his eyes widened.

"Uh... Brett, come look at this," Anthony said, motioning for Brett to come over.

Brett did so, and looked outside. Brett blinked, a little shocked by what he saw. Walking toward the large building, was a very familiar person. One with silver hair and sapphire blue eyes.

Zeros.

But... he wasn't alone this time. Rander was with him too, as well as two girls. When the four entered the Inn, Zeros stopped, and blinked.

"Hey, it's you guys again."

Eve smiled at him.

"Hi! How are you?"

"Fine, thank you."

Rander snorted and rolled his eyes. Brett felt jealousy building up inside of him, but he kept his yap shut.

"Zeros, who are they?" a black haired girl asked.

"Just some people I'd bumped into while I was in Vault," Zeros answered.

"Quite literally!" Erica added, and her and Eve giggled.

Zeros rolled his eyes, though not in an annoyed way.

"Yeah well, accidents happen."

After some brief introduction, the eight fighters spread out, or talked for awhile, which was what the girls did. Zeros didn't seem to be the best company in the world, but, when someone addressed him, he was nice enough.

"Hey Zeros, how long have you been fighting anyway?" Anthony asked, pure out of curiosity.

"A long time," Zeros said, gazing out the window at the darkening sky.

Brett looked a little suspicious, and he wondered: 'Why won't he tell us how long he's been fighting? Is he hiding something?'

Zeros sighed and said: "I lost count of the years so I don't know how many years I've been fighting. You happy now?"

At that last sentence, Zeros looked at Brett, who was gaping.

Eve was about to retort, when Cecilia entered the Inn.

"Hey everybody! Well, I managed to get you people in!" she said, a smile on her face.

Brett, Eve, Anthony and Erica smiled too, as did Onyx, Rander and Sara, who knew what it was for, but Zeros didn't do anything about it.

Cecilia's smile suddenly dropped as she said: "And that's the good news."

Everyone looked confused, except for Zeros.

"What's the bad?" Eve asked, almost afraid to ask.

"Zealot's entering as well..."

Brett sat on his bed, pondering on the events that had taken place. Tomorrow was the big day; Colosso. For some reason, Brett had a bad feeling about fighting Zealot. Zealot was hiding his true power, though Brett had no idea how that kid did it. He still found it hard to believe that Zealot was still a child. But, Zealot had won Colosso 2 times in a row already, meaning he was good.

However, Zeros hadn't been concerned in the least, and Brett had heard from Onyx, that Zeros was entering in Colosso as well. Either he hid it well, or he wasn't worried in the least. Something wasn't right here. There was something wrong with Zeros.

As usual, Zeros wasn't asleep. He was watching the moon and stars. His head was swarming with different thoughts.

That Zealot... Zeros didn't know why, but he could've sworn he'd heard that name before. He tried to remember, but it only gave him a headache.

'Too far back,' Zeros thought, softly shaking his head.

"Shouldn't you be asleep? Colosso's tomorrow, remember?" an unfamiliar voice said.

Zeros turned around, and instantly noticed the boy standing against a tree, arms crossed over his chest.

"Unless you want to be dead-tired in the morning, you should get some rest," the boy said, a smirk playing on his lips.

"Ch, I've been living like this for as long as I can remember, so stop acting like I can't take care of myself," Zeros replied, just as smoothly as the boy.

"Hey, I'm just trying to help," the boy continued.

"Then don't." Zeros turned away from the boy, and continued to gaze at the stars.

"I'm Zealot, by the way, and you are?" the boy asked.

"Zeros."

Zeros didn't really bother, but, that name... it was so familiar.

Zealot looked at Zeros as he continued to watch the stars.

"You don't seem to like people who don't want to die," Zealot suddenly said.

Zeros looked around, confused.

"I heard what you said to that group of yours."

Zeros snorted, and looked at the sky again.

"People were meant to live, then die, not to live on forever. If a person dies, there's nothing that can be changed about it. The process can be slowed, and in rare cases, completely stopped. But I could care less," Zeros said.

Zealot blinked.

"And they say *I'm* heartless. You should really hear yourself talking. They really need to rewrite the word 'heartless' in their dictionary."

Zealot was trying to bait him, but Zeros was not one for jokes or baiting.

"Think whatever you want, a personal opinion can't be changed."

"Ch, what's wrong with you!? What do have you against dying people anyway?!" Zealot demanded.

"I have nothing against the people. I have a grudge against people who won't accept that they should die, instead of live. If you wish to grow old, don't slow the aging process, but make it count until it's over."

Zealot shook his head sadly.

"That doesn't really make sense. I want to grow old, but I don't want to die. I mean, who does?" he asked.

"I do."

Zealot's eyes widened in shock, and he was left speechless.

"If I'm to die, I'll die, if I'm to live, I'll live. Death will come when one is ready, even if one may think he's not."

Zealot shook his head to clear the cobwebs, and said: "I've heard a lot of strange things, and met a lot of weird people, but I think you're the weirdest guy I've met so far!"

Zeros sighed, but continued to gaze at the stars.

"Should I take that as an insult? Or as a compliment?" he finally asked.

Zealot growled.

"You're impossible!" he shouted.

"Look who's talking," Zeros mumbled, before walking away, not looking at Zealot.

Zealot watched Zeros from under his hood, wondering what Zeros would fight like. He hadn't seen the man fight before, and he was rather curious.

Today was Colosso, and everyone was there. Brett, Anthony, Cecilia, Rander, Zeros, and Erica. Zealot gazed at Erica for awhile. If he was honest with himself, which he usually was, he found her rather pretty, but he had promised not to get involved in any relationship, in fear of having the girl he cared about robbed from him like his parents had been robbed from him.

He gave a small sigh. Although he wanted to see what Zeros could do, he knew that Colosso wouldn't be all that good.

Suddenly, they heard something outside.

"Welcome ladies and gentlemen to this year's Colosso!!"

Loud cheers could be heard from the ring, and Zealot snorted. Every year the same thing, and they couldn't get enough of it.

"Let's start the first round!!"

*****ROUND 1: ZEALOT VS.
CECILIA*****

Cecilia stretched her aching muscles, and stood up, holding her hands in a clawing position, ready to rip someone's flesh apart with her razor-sharp nails. Zealot simply stood there, waiting for Cecilia to finish.

"So, you're my opponent once again," Cecilia said, not moving, besides the small jumps she made with her feet.

She made short jumps from one foot to another to keep moving, and increase her speed.

"Doesn't matter. You won't win," Zealot said, keeping his cool.

Cecilia scoffed, but kept quiet. Zealot took on a fighting-stance, and waited patiently. Cecilia knew he was waiting, and there was no way in Hell that he would attack before she did.

'Idiot,' she thought.

"FIREWALL!!!" she suddenly screamed as she stopped moving, and red spirals circled her.

Zealot's eyebrows scrunched together as the blazing fires came at him.

He bent his knees, and jumped up, avoiding the wall of fire easily. Zealot landed right in front of Cecilia, and swung at her with his fist. Cecilia blocked and made a move to kick him, but Zealot raised his knee to block her. Their fists and feet were sent flying, as they both tried to get through the other's defenses.

When Zealot made a move to punch Cecilia to her jaw, she bent backwards, and back-flipped away from him. Zealot growled angrily. This had to end.

He smirked wickedly as blue spirals circled him and lit his face for a moment. Zealot sent a huge blast of water at the unsuspecting Cecilia, who cried out in surprise, and was knocked away, as well as knocked out.

Zeros blinked in confusion.

'I thought he was a Venus Adept... that's what Cecilia said he was.'

"What WAS that?!" Brett asked, confused.

"I didn't know he could use Mercury Psynergy," Erica said, utterly shocked.

*****ROUND 2: ERICA VS.
EDGAR*****

Erica grabbed her mace, knowing that this guy would be down easily. This Edgar didn't look too strong, but she was sure he could pack a punch. She held her mace in her hand, and glared at her opponent. This guy fought with a staff, though it wasn't as large as that of Sara.

"This will be an easy victory," Edgar said, snickering.

Erica didn't respond.

'Let him think I'm weak. He's in for one big surprise!' she thought.

Edgar swung his staff at Erica, but she dodged, easily. The second hit almost got through, but she just managed to block with her mace. With an easy twist, she twirled her mace so that Edgar got the end in his face, and a hit to the head sent him into unconsciousness.

Erica smiled and said: "That was easy, wouldn't you say?"

*****ROUND 3: ZEROS VS.

LISA*****

Lisa watched the tall man step into the ring, not seeming to bother. He was cute, but he didn't seem to acknowledge her.

Zeros really didn't care. He was just here to fight, and that's it. Lisa held her dirk tightly, and when the signal was given, she ran at Zeros, who simply watched, before stepping out of her way when she got too close. Lisa was starting to find it annoying, and tried to kick him, but he simply grabbed her leg and flipped her away with ease.

The girl landed on her feet, and ran at him, the same time he did. They met in the center, and Lisa's face was contorted in pain. Zeros' face was extremely calm however. He calmly stepped back, allowing Lisa to drop.

Zealot raised a curious eyebrow.

'He's better than I expected. Won't help him though. He might have a natural advantage over me, but he doesn't know me well.'

Zealot smirked wickedly under his hood.

*****ROUND 5: RANER VS.
CLARK*****

Rander popped his knuckles, and watched his opponent step onto the ring. The man was a few inches taller, but it didn't matter to Rander. He could take this guy out easily.

He unsheathed his blade, and waited for his opponent to attack. Clark was a rather old man, but he looked strong enough. Rander smirked when the announcer called out to begin, and dodged the old man, who was quite fast for age 100 or so. However, Rander just kicked him out of the ring to end it.

*****ROUND 6: MIKE VS.
ANTHONY*****

Anthony stepped onto the ring, holding his club in one hand, his other hand clenched in a fist. That guy had been taunting him for hours, and the only reason he hadn't charged at him yet, was because Brett had held him back. Anthony was looking extremely pissed off, while Mike looked rather smug. Mike fought with a machete, and looked extremely self-confident.

'Not for long,' Anthony thought coldly.

"Alright, let's just see what you can do!" Mike taunted again as the bell to start the fight rang.

Anthony clenched his free fist so hard, that the knuckles turned white.

"I'll let you start! So go ahead!" Mike said.

Anthony growled in anger, and shot forward with such speed, that hardly anyone saw him. Mike got Anthony's club

straight to his nose, before getting kicked below the belt, and punched out of the ring.

The redhead was still seething, and left the ring in anger.

Zealot was shocked by what the boy had done.

'Note to self; don't make this guy angry,' he thought.

When he looked at Zeros from the corner of his eyes, he noticed the guy smirking at him.

"What's so amusing?" Zealot hissed.

Zeros chuckled and said: "I think you don't know that I'm a Jupiter Adept."

Zealot instantly blanched slightly. Zeros chuckled silently and turned back to the arena.

'Damn that bastard straight to Hell!!!' Zealot thought angrily.

Been there, done that, a familiar voice said.

Zealot growled, but his only response was Zeros' smirk widening.

*****ROUND 8: LEONTINE VS.

BRETT*****

Brett removed a few strands of hair from his eyes, before crouching into a battle position, after which Leontine followed. Both combatants fought with swords, but what Leontine didn't know, was that Brett was better than she was. The woman's foot moved a little, and Brett's eyes

furrowed slightly. Before anyone knew it, Leontine was shot at Brett.

He'd seen her coming though, and easily blocked the downward swing, surprising the woman. Brett then lashed out at her, but she just managed to block. Her face had shock written over it, but Brett looked rather smug, not showing what he was thinking. Leontine lashed out again, but Brett sidestepped easily. This time though, he took a few more steps back, and golden sparks surrounded him.

Leontine, like all others who didn't know Psynergy, didn't see it, obviously.

"RAGNAROK!" Brett hollered and Leontine was hit with a strong invisible force, sending her out of the ring.

"That was a good battle there!" Cecilia said with a smile, shaking Brett's hand.

"Uh... thanks, I guess," Brett mumbled.

Zeros watched this, not really bothering with it, before heading to a window and leaning on the windowsill. He staid like that for awhile, just watching everyone walk about like nothing was wrong.

He frowned a little, and pulled out his axe. He ran his fingers past the blade, and scoffed, before placing it away. Zeros looked back at the gang, who were all talking to each other, safe for Zealot. Zeros couldn't see the boy's eyes, but he *did* see a few stray locks of hair.

Gold.

Stumbling through the woods, he swayed back and forth, holding the bloodied axe in his clutches. The pommelstone was broken, and would probably never be fixed again. He fell to his knees, leaning against a tree, panting for breath as blood poured down his forehead. When a shadow blocked the sunlight, he looked up. The person had strange golden hair and the same color eyes.

"Are you alright?! What happened to you?!"

"I was... I was attacked... I... I guess I wasn't... wasn't strong enough..."

"Know what? I'll train you for awhile. How's that?"

"Thank you..."

"What's your name?"

".....Zeros....."

"That's a nice name. I'm Zealot, nice to meet you."

Zeros violently shook his head, holding a hand to his forehead with a groan, a sudden migraine sweeping over him.

"Zeros? You alright?" Onyx asked, worry lacing her voice.

"I'm fine, I'm fine!" Zeros said. "Just a slight migraine."

Zealot looked up, confusion in his eyes, though no one saw it under his hood.

"You sure, Zeros?" Sara asked, her staff still slung over her shoulder, arm thrown around it.

"Yes, I'm fine," Zeros said with a nod.

Zealot blinked. That look... where had he seen that before. It was innocent, yet with a touch of malice.

The description suddenly sprang into his head, and he instantly remembered.

He spread several pieces of paper, until he stumbled across a small painting, done with Kai's hand, he could easily tell. He looked at the door, then sprinted to the shadows, where he studied the painting.

It was a painting of a young girl. She had long hair, was dressed in a long dress. In her hands, she held an axe with a broken pommelstone. There was a strange look in those eyes. Tears were forming in them, and she seemed to be sad, yet angry about something.

Zealot turned the picture around, hoping for a name, but finding none.

*Instead, he read; **Innocence, with a touch of malice**, in Kai's bold writing.*

'Hmmm... I wonder if that girl's related to Zeros,' Zealot wondered.

That's when the next round was finally announced. He pushed off on the wall, and walked toward the ring. Erica gulped nervously, and followed, because it was her turn to fight Zealot.

I am SOOOOOOOO sorry for not updating in such a long time! I've been completely hooked on a different game for months. Sorry, once again! Anyway.

New characters that have been named;

Zealot

Cecilia

Scott (doesn't travel with the gang)

***Chapter 7*: Chapter 5: Fighting Adepts**

Chapter 5; Fighting Adepts

*****ROUND 9: ZEALOT VS.
ERICA*****

Zealot and Erica stood, facing each other, Zealot with his arms crossed and Erica lightly shaking in fear. People knew that Zealot would win, and that he could take down Erica whenever he wanted, but what was he waiting for? Erica was thinking the same things, hoping for it all to be over soon.

She suddenly felt a strange trickle in the back of her head.

'Just because you're cute,' she heard, 'I won't dispose of you right away.'

Erica's eyes widened in shock, but Zealot simply smirked. She finally shrugged and grabbed her dagger. Zealot noticed this, and pulled out his own dagger.

Erica whistled in wonder and said: "Nice blade!"

Zealot smirked.

"It was my dad's, before he died," he said, not noticing a person in the audience flinch lightly.

'But if that dagger belonged to his father... that means that he's...'

"You okay?" Onyx asked. "You look a little pale."

"I'm fine," he said, and left for a little while.

Metal clashed, and both Adepts had their free hand on their back, so as not to cheat. Erica lashed out at Zealot's face, but he jumped aside, and lashed out at Erica too. Erica blocked with much difficulty, but she managed. Metal continued to clash, and they jumped aside, before running back at each other, lashing out and running past.

They stopped a few feet further, not moving.

Zealot looked straight ahead, until he felt something trickle down his cheek.

'What the---?' he thought and allowed his tongue to lick it up. 'Blood?!'

Zealot's brows furrowed, but he kept his calm. He found it odd of himself. Had she been anybody else, he would've exploded in anger. But he didn't, and he was starting to wonder why that was.

Erica panted silently, feeling the wound on her right arm burn. It ran from her elbow up to just below her shoulder, and of the arm she fought with too. Erica knew she hit him, and she figured he'd soon explode in anger. She'd heard that no one had ever been able to make Zealot bleed, and he would be pretty pissed off at her right now.

Silence reigned, with people holding their breath for awhile. Zealot finally straightened up, and Erica heard, so she stood up too. They didn't turn around yet. Zealot sighed through his nose, and turned around. Erica turned her head first, then fully turned. They stood, face-to-face, blood running down Erica's arm and Zealot's cheek. Zealot raised his free

hand and moved his thumb across his reopened scar, then looked down at the blood on the offending digit.

Erica gulped. She was dead.

"She's dead," Cecilia mumbled, jaws clamped together in fright.

"This can't be good..." Sara said, leaning on her staff.

Surprisingly, Zealot didn't do a thing.

Erica waited patiently, but nothing happened. The duo stood, facing each other, neither making a move. Zealot finally spoke.

"You're the first in two years to scratch me," he said with a smirk.

His free hand moved up, and grasped the side of his hood.

"I must say, I'm impressed." And with that sentence, he lowered the hood.

Erica gasped audibly. He was no older than she was! He had pure golden hair and the same shade eyes. His eyes spoke of wisdom *far* beyond his years, and he had a single wound on his face.

"Uh... thanks..." Erica said.

Zealot smirked and sheathed his dagger, before pulling out his sword. Erica switched weapons too, and both of them

took on a battle pose. Zealot's sword was made out of gold as well, but Erica tried hard not to focus on that.

She finally managed to succeed, and they stood, waiting. Neither of the combatants moved, until Erica lost her patience. Her foot shifted a millimeter, and Zealot smirked, before they both ran toward the center. Swords clashed loudly, and the battle began again. Everyone was seated on the edge of their seat, figuratively speaking, seeing as there weren't any chairs.

Zealot lashed out, Erica blocked, Erica stabbed, Zealot dodged. Sideways slash, duck, upward slash, block, swordtwirl so the other's stuck in the ground. Erica was going to regret this, but she kicked Zealot to his chin, sending him away. Zealot growled and rubbed his chin. It didn't hurt, but it had surprised him enough to drive him away.

He looked at Erica, who was watching him with a determined look on her face. Zealot growled again, and pure purple spirals surrounded him.

"SPARK PLASMA!!!!" he screamed, and lightning shot down on Erica, who cried out in shock, and was close to unconsciousness.

She wasn't about to give up though. Blue spirals circled her, and she aimed her palms at Zealot.

"FROST!!!" she screamed, and before anyone knew it, Zealot became encased in a block of ice.

Erica stood up on shaky legs, trying to stay conscious. Nothing seemed to happen for the first few seconds, until the ice suddenly shattered. Zealot looked at Erica with an amused smirk on his face, arms crossed over his chest.

Before Erica could stop him, his elbow was buried in her guts.

She hadn't even seen him move.

Zeros watched Zealot carrying Erica away from the ring over his shoulder. As the battle had progressed, he'd studied the boy's face carefully.

'No doubt about it. It's him, alright,' he thought.

*****ROUND 10: ZEROS VS.
MONICA*****

The girl popped her knuckles, and Zeros simply watched. This Monica seemed like a worthy opponent... NOT!

She was more like your everyday slut actually.

'I don't even want to know how she got in,' he thought.

Monica smiled and winked at him. Zeros wasn't affected in the least, safe for that it disgusted him.

'Pathetic,' he thought, not noticing someone watch him in curiosity.

'That's odd,' Zealot thought, blinking behind his hood. 'I can't read a single thought of that guy. What's up with that?'

He suddenly noticed that black haired girl that had been with Zeros, looking down in wonder.

"You're a Jupiter Adept, right?" Zealot asked.

The girl looked at him in confusion.

"Uh... yeah... why?" she asked.

"Have you ever tried to read his thoughts?" Zealot said with a nod at Zeros.

She looked at Zeros.

"Sure did. But he has a strange wall shielding his thoughts. I can't get through," she said.

'Hmmm...' Zealot thought, looking at Zeros again.

Zeros easily stepped aside, avoiding the girl by a long shot. Zeros finally had enough as he held one hand behind his back. Monica ran at him again, but Zeros brought his hand back and threw a blazing black knife at the girl.

It lashed at her arm, causing her to cry out. Zeros suddenly spread his fingers, forming more of the same knives which he then threw at the girl, who was easily knocked out of the ring, before he left the ring

Zealot gasped inaudibly, not believing what he saw.

'T-t-that was---' he thought.

*****ROUND 11: RANDER VS.
ANTHONY*****

The duo stood, each on opposite sides of the ring. Rander was smaller than Anthony was, but both knew of the other's abilities. That was what would make this battle last longer

than everyone would suspect. Anthony was holding his club in his hand, and Rander had his sword in his grasp. The duo nodded at each other, just before the fight started.

"FIREWALL!!!" Anthony immediately shouted, red spirals shooting up around him.

The blast would've hit Rander, hadn't he rolled aside at the last second.

"GRAND GAIA!!!" Rander suddenly hollered, and an earthquake of an enormous size suddenly struck, nearly sending Anthony out of ring.

Nearly.

Anthony shot up, and avoided a slash from Rander's sword, then lunged out with his own weapon, only to have it blocked. Rander kicked Anthony's feet away from under him, making the other fighter tumble over. Anthony rolled aside to avoid Rander's blade, and managed to kick Rander to his chin while still on the ground. He used the momentum he was going at to backflip back to his feet.

Weapons clashed, and Psynergy was hurled in almost every possible direction. People couldn't see the Psynergy, but they had already learned what it was.

Finally, Rander had had about enough, and managed to kick Anthony out of ring, knocked out.

Zealot blinked at Rander when the fight had stopped, and wondered if he'd have to fight this guy too. However, his eyes soon turned back to someone else.

Zeros had also been watching the battle, not even moving an inch, as if he wasn't fully with them, but trying to make people think he was.

'If only I could read this guy's thoughts!'

*****ROUND 12: RAY VS.
BRETT*****

Brett got onto the ring, and stared his opponent down for a while.

Ray was about 5'10, had long, dirty blonde hair, and a tanned skin. His eyes were of an odd silvery gray color. He wore some dark gray pants, a white long sleeved shirt, a blue tunic over it, and some black gloves. Ray was holding a dirk in his hand, and Brett figured that he fought with that. The strange part though, was that he had a Psynergy Aura around him.

Ray smirked and said: "About time I had a good workout!"

Brett quirked an eyebrow at Ray, but said nothing. They stood there for awhile, just watching each other, until the starting shot sounded. Ray furrowed his brows, and ran at Brett, who waited for a few seconds, until running at Ray. They were about to hit, when Brett jumped aside. Ray stopped mid-step and changed directions.

'He's fast!' Brett thought, and managed to block a lash from Ray's dirk.

He lashed out again, but Brett ducked under the swing, and managed to punch Ray in his guts, making the other man double over.

Brett whirled around and kicked Ray to his spine with his heel, sending the other man into the ground. Ray rolled out of the way of Brett's sword, and kicked the boy's feet away. Brett used his hands to break his fall and shot back up to block another blow from Ray. The duo jumped away from each other, before lunging out again. This process continued, until Ray seemed to tire of it.

"BOLT!!!" Ray screamed.

Purple spirals surrounded him in a frenzy, and Brett looked up, and could just avoid the blast that would've hit him on the head if he hadn't. Brett looked at Ray, a calculating look on his face, before Brett's eyebrows furrowed.

Furious red spirals surrounded Brett, and he screamed:
"PLANET DIVER!!!"

The blast hit Ray head-on, and the other combatant was out for the count within seconds.

"Thanks for letting me borrow Flash, Anthony," Brett said, returning the Fire Djinni to the Mars Adept.

"No sweat," Anthony said when Flash sat down on his shoulder. "I didn't trust that guy anyway."

"Okay, he was odd, I admit, big deal?" Eve asked, not really knowing why everyone had worried about that Ray.

Cecilia sat up from where she'd been lying on a table (something she always did) and said: "There was an odd air around him. Something I didn't quite trust."

Onyx looked confused and asked: "How could you tell?"

Cecilia shrugged. "Don't know, don't care."

Sara tapped her staff against the ground, thinking.

"Hmmm... Zeros, what do you think of Ray?" she asked, turning to the silver haired man.

Zeros, clearly not listening, looked at her in confusion, before he said: "Ray? Not too sure. I admit, he's odd, but being odd does not mean he can't be trusted. To know for sure, you need to know him like you know yourself. And even then, you can never be too careful."

Zealot listened from his corner in the room, one eyebrow raised. He had his hood once again over his head, shielding his face from the others.

'Hmmm... Canyon, did you hear that?'

Yes, I did. He's pretty smart, don't you think?

'I think he's more of a smart-ass!'

Zealot!!

'Canyon, he thinks he knows everything, but he's wrong! People try to enjoy life, and living only to know you'll die later is no way of living! Some people don't want to die, because they want to get the best out of life! If he learns that, then I might consider him smart.'

.....O... kay... guess you have a point.

'Now that I think about it, he's my next opponent!'

Hmmm... go a little easy on him!

'Canyon, he's an adult already! He can handle it!'

Better than you can imagine.

Zealot's head whipped around to the person who had spoken to his mind. Zeros stared at him with a calm stare, no sign of amusement on his face, before he turned to look at Onyx, who approached him and began talking with him. Zealot could only gape at him.

'The Hell?!?! Who is that guy?!'

No answer came.

Through the halls of the castle, walked a man with long black hair, tied up in a braid. The front half of his head was shaved and there was a vicious glare on his face. His dark black, almost red eyes showed no emotions at all, just anger and hatred. He wore black Chinese robes with black pants, had a black sash around his waist and wore some black slippers with white socks.

He stalked into the room, causing the woman inside to turn and look at him.

"Violent Wind," she acknowledged, then turned back to the scroll she was holding.

"Any word from junior yet?" Kai asked not even bothering to look up.

Violent Wind scoffed and said: "Yes. He said it would be almost impossible to track her now."

The woman whirled around, and looked at him in confusion.

"What?!" she demanded, anger clear in her voice.

"She gave her amulet to that guard from Vault, Ray confirmed that he had it around his neck during Colosso," Violent Wind said icily, like he always did.

"She gave our parents' amulet to some---*guard*---from Vault?!?!" the woman demanded, her hand nearly snapping the scroll in her hand in half.

"Calm down alright, there are other ways to locate her," Kai said, opening his eyes slowly.

"THAT'S NOT THE POINT!!!!" the woman screamed at him, and Kai and Violent Wind instantly backed up, knowing that this was when she was the most dangerous.

She seemed to calm down, slightly, and said: "Kai! Call that Goddamned brat of yours in here! And Violent Wind! Get Janias in here! THIS INSTANT!!!!"

Both Kai and Violent Wind dashed from the room, any excuse to get away from the raging woman in the room. The woman growled in anger, exposing razor-sharp fangs.

"SIS!!!!" she finally screamed, facing the ceiling. "YOU'RE GOING TO REGRET DOING **THIIIIIIIIIISSS!!!!**"

"Hmmm?"

Zeros gazed out the window, confusion written over his face.

"What's wrong, Zeros?" Sara asked, concern and confusion clear in her voice.

Zeros didn't answer, just stared out the window for awhile, then turned back around.

"Nothing. Just thought I heard someone scream," he muttered, waving the matter aside.

Rander looked a little confused, but finally shrugged it off.

And suddenly, an announcement was made.

The thirteenth round was about to begin.

Okay, it's not as long as previous chapters, but fighting scenes are tough to write! Next chapter will hopefully be a little longer, seeing as the battle will be longer.

Next fight: ZEALOT VS. ZEROS

New characters:

Ray

Violent Wind

***Chapter 8*: Chapter 6: Battle God's Palm**

Chapter 6; Battle God's Palm

Zeros cracked his knuckles and blew a little on his fists, before looking up at Zealot, standing on the other side of the ring. Zealot was also looking at Zeros, for once, having a barrier around his thoughts to keep Zeros out. This guy was good at sneaking into his brain for some reason. A silent breeze began brewing, tousling up their hair and clothes. Zeros didn't move an inch, and Zealot waited for the other to attack, as he usually did.

Suddenly, Zeros smirked, and the winds suddenly shifted radically, removing Zealot's hood within the blink of an eye.

"If you don't mind, I'd rather see my opponent's face," Zeros said, and Zealot looked at him oddly.

Instead of the breeze slowing again, it seemed to increase.

"Oh, and Zealot," Zeros said.

Zealot looked up from trying to stay on his feet.

Zeros smirked and said: "Have a nice flight."

Zealot's eyes registered confusion, before he understood.

"WHOA!!!" Zealot cried out as he was shot into the air by a swirling Tornado attack.

However, Zealot was no fool, and he focused his own Psynergy. His golden eyes finally focused on Zeros, who

stood, unharmed by the violent winds. Purple electricity sparked at Zealot's hand as Zealot studied the course of the wind.

Finally, the electricity was sent into the swirling typhoon, following the course of the wind, and finally reaching the destined target.

Zeros screamed as a sudden blast of electricity hit him, making him lose his focus. Zealot found himself back on the ground within a few seconds, and stopped the flow of electricity. Zeros dropped to one knee, leaning on his arm. Zealot studied Zeros for awhile, and noticed that he wasn't even panting, or indicating signs of pain. Zeros shook his head once and got back to his feet, dusting himself off. Zeros raised his head slowly.

Zealot was shocked to see the man's eyes shift between sapphire blue and ruby red, and it kept on, until his eyes settled for sapphire blue again.

"So it's true then," Zeros said suddenly, catching everyone off guard.

Zealot blinked, frown not leaving his face.

"What are you babbling about?" Zealot asked.

"I might tell, if you can defeat me!" Zeros said, his voice losing all previous emotions that had been there.

The golden haired teen frowned further, and scoffed.

"Fine then," he said.

Zeros' eyes flickered between blue and red again, but this time, they settled for ruby red. Zeros crouched down, taking

on a fighting stance, and Zealot followed shortly after.

"Uh-oh," Rander, Onyx and Sara said at the same time.

"What is it?" Erica asked.

"Trouble," Onyx whimpered.

"Poor guy," Sara mumbled.

"Yeah, Zeros is in for it now," Cecilia said.

Rander whirled around to face her, shock written all over his face.

"Zeros?! We're talking about *Zealot*!!"

Zeros growled lowly at his opponent, and Zealot studied Zeros's movements. Or lack of it. Zeros didn't move an inch, and the wind had completely stopped moments ago. Everyone was deathly silent as the duo stood, facing each other.

When Zeros's eyes suddenly narrowed, Zealot tightened his muscles, right before he had to jump aside to avoid a blast of purple electricity. Zeros followed Zealot's jump with his eyes, and he growled again, before vanishing in a blur. Zealot's jump was cut short when he suddenly got kicked down back to earth.

Zealot crashed into the earth, and managed to roll aside just in time to avoid a kick to his spine that could've shattered it easily. Zeros' foot was instantly buried in the ground, but he simply placed his other foot on the ground, and somehow

managed to kick through the ground and hit Zealot to his head, sending him back.

Zealot managed to get a good grip on the ground, and skidded to a halt, before jumping aside to avoid a punch aimed for his head. Zeros whipped his head around and glared at Zealot, who landed calmly quite a few feet away.

'Man! He's fast as well as lethal! I haven't had a challenge like this since I battled Kai!'

Zealot smirked violently.

'This is going to be fun!'

Zealot narrowed his eyes, and ran at Zeros, fist pulled back to strike. Zeros screamed and ran at Zealot with equal speed, pulling his fist back before the two threw their punches forward. The punches didn't hit each other, like everyone had thought.

Instead, Zealot managed to hit Zeros' jaw, as well as the other way around. Zeros growled in anger, and slung his leg around, hitting Zealot to his side, which sent him flying to the edge of the ring. Zealot just managed to hang in there.

The teen thought for a moment, then faded out of view. Zeros' gaze instantly snapped up, and he jumped aside just in time to avoid a kick aimed for his head. Zealot was having his back turned to Zeros, but before the silver haired man could do anything, he whirled around and slammed his fist into Zeros' guts, making the man double over slightly. Zeros seethed in fury, and landed a furious kick where it hurt.

Zealot doubled over completely, and received a punch to his chin, sending him into the air. He couldn't get very high because Zeros punched him to the side again. Zealot rolled

back to his feet, and ran back at Zeros. He ducked underneath another punch, and headbutted the man in his guts, sending him to the ground.

Zeros rolled out of the way of a kick, and kicked Zealot's feet away from under him. Zeros jumped up and slammed Zealot to the ground with his heel.

Zealot grunted painfully, and cried out when Zeros managed to keep Zealot down by stomping his foot in his stomach. Zeros raised his foot, but before Zealot could even move, Zeros had rammed his foot down on his ribcage, making the teen scream. Zeros pushed his foot down hard, and Zealot felt more than heard his ribs crack under the large pressure suddenly placed on his poor ribcage. Zeros showed no signs of mercy as he placed more and more weight on the foot on Zealot's chest, increasing the kid's screams.

For Zealot, it looked like there were only two ways to end the battle; one was to just surrender, and the other was to die. But Zealot would *never* surrender, and there was no way in Hell he was going to die a teenager! Zealot snapped his eyes open and grabbed Zeros by his ankle, before swinging him down to earth. Zeros cried out in shock and surprise, but that was it, because Zealot managed to get Zeros in a headlock, denying Zeros the desperately needed air.

Zeros grasped the boy's arms with his hands, but Zealot's grip was too tight to break. The pressure put on Zealot's chest was almost too much, but he refused to give up! Zeros began gasping for air as Zealot tightened his hold, squeezing shut his windpipe, and nearly cracking the fragile bones in his neck.

"Give up! There's no way you'll be able to win!" Zealot wheezed, feeling the pain of his ribs sting in his chest.

Zeros continued to struggle violently against Zealot's hold, but Zealot would not allow Zeros to rise from the ground. His breaths came out short, and ragged, and his heart rate began to speed up to match the sudden increase in breathing.

As if on a last resort, Zeros released Zealot's arms with one hand, clenched a fist, and began to elbow Zealot in his chest. Zealot gasped at the extra pain added to his chest, but Zeros didn't stop. He kept on, pounding his elbow into Zealot's helpless chest, before the teen was forced to release him.

The silver haired man took the chance to punch Zealot away and retrieve his lost breath. One hand was on his neck, trying to soothe the ache there, while he leaned on the other. Zealot was busy mending to his chest, rubbing over it to estimate the total amount of broken ribs.

'Five at the most... DAMN!!'

"What in blazes?!?!" Scott exclaimed in horror as he watched the fight progress.

Zealot had never had this much trouble with an enemy, not even Adepts had posed a trouble. The only one capable of seriously hurting Zealot had been Kai! Scott had seen his share of that.

'By Sol... I have a feeling... Zealot is in trouble.'

Zealot was grasping a rock in his hand, right beside his face, and his face was contorted in anger. The grip of his hand

tightened, and he ground the rock into dust, before he punched the ground with a loud slam.

'Damn that bastard!' he hissed into his mind angrily.
'CANYON!!!'

Zealot! Calm down! Don't let your anger get the best of you if you want to live!

'I DON'T CARE!!! I NEED YOUR HELP!! **NOW!!!**'

Canyon gulped, and nodded inside Zealot's pouch.

Zealot jumped to his feet, and Zeros stumbled to his own feet as well. Zealot was glaring hatefully at the man, and finally released a scream. Canyon burst forth from Zealot's pouch, and dissolved in golden spirals, which were then shot at Zeros.

Zeros saw it coming, and *slapped* the Djinn aside. Canyon crashed into a wall and lost consciousness within a few seconds.

"CANYON!!!" Zealot screamed, but he couldn't run over because the Djinni was out of ring.

Zealot growled and turned to Zeros, who was still panting slightly. Zeros finally growled and screamed out, and all Adepts gasped when pitch black spirals shot up around him, making his hair fly upward in a frenzy.

"ATRA!!!" Zeros hollered, and from seemingly nowhere, a Djinni burst forth.

The Djinni had blood red eyes, nine whips with spikes at the end for tails, a midnight black body, small clawed hands,

and the normal feet for a Djinni. With a cry of pure fury, the Djinni dissolved into sparks and shot forward.

It ducked under Zealot's punches, and shot into the earth beneath Zealot's feet. Zealot looked down in horror as the earth turned black beneath him, and gave away, sucking him up before he could do anything about it.

The ground turned back to normal, and closed up. The black sparks shot up in the sky, and formed a large portal. Zealot tumbled out of it, falling onto the ground loudly with his clothing shredded. And because he landed on his arm, it snapped on impact with the ground, making him scream. The portal closed, and things returned to normal.

The teen stumbled to his feet, holding his fractured arm. Luckily it wasn't his sword arm or he'd be in real trouble. However, with but one arm at your command, you're pretty much screwed already.

Anthony winced as if that had been him down there, and Brett gasped audibly.

"By Luna and Sol!" Eve exclaimed.

"No way is that possible!!" Cecilia said, one hand in front of her mouth.

Erica watched with wide eyes, feeling as something had stabbed her when she saw him crash into the earth. Problem was, she had no idea why!!

Zealot grasped his arm tightly, feeling the pain surge through his body, burning every fiber of his being.

'Well,' Zealot thought, 'at least I still have my hand.'

"I don't see what your hand has to do with this!" Zeros suddenly called out, voice void of emotions.

Zealot sighed and put the barrier back up.

"For your information," Zealot hissed angrily, "I lost my hand during the battle with my brother!!"

Zeros quirked one eyebrow.

"If you fought Kai, I'm surprised you were able to tell the tale."

Zealot had nearly screamed out, when it registered in his mind what Zeros had said.

"What did you say?!?" Zealot demanded.

Zeros seemed to think, and suddenly slapped his hand to his face.

"Stupid!!!" he hissed.

Zeros finally looked back at him.

"Enough talk! NOW FIGHT!!!" he screamed, and shot a blast of pure purple energy at Zealot.

The teen gasped and began avoiding the blasts as they soared past, barely missing him.

'It's not much, but it might break his concentration,' Zealot thought, forming something in his hand.

The knife in his hand was small and pure gold, but Zeros didn't notice as he continued to fire away.

'Please make this hit,' Zealot pleaded to whatever was up there, and sent the knife soaring.

An explosion followed as the knife hit, and a scream of pain was heard as the flurry of blasts stopped. Zealot hurriedly refocused his Psynergy, and sent a large bolt of electricity at the silver haired man. Zeros screamed out in horror, and suddenly, something shot through Zealot's head.

"Please let go of me...you're hurting me..."

"Shut up shut up shut up SHUT UP!!"

"Stop! Please stop! NO!!!"

*"I SAID **SHUT UP!!!**"*

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!"

"AAAAAAAAAAAAAH!!!" Zealot screamed, grasping his head and stopping the current of electricity.

'Pain... it hurts! Gods... it hurts!' was the only thought running through Zealot's head.

Zeros dropped to the ground, landing on his knees, grasping his upper arms and shaking violently.

"Pain... it hurts! Gods... it hurts!" Zeros whimpered, mimicking Zealot's thoughts.

No one seemed to have heard though. And Zealot thought it'd be for the best.

Zealot frowned, and pulled out his blade, causing Zeros to look up. Something flashed before his eyes, before it was gone, and they sparked with fury. His hand reached behind his back, under his cape, and pulled out a large double-edged axe, drenched red, and a glowing purple pommelstone on it. There were four gems on the axe, each a different color, and all shone brightly.

Purple, blue, red, and gold.

Exactly like his dagger, only shaped like an axe, and forged by Demons. Zealot's grip on his sword tightened.

If he wasn't careful, he could possibly be dead the second that thing was embedded in his flesh.

Zeros rose to his feet clutching the axe in one hand, fury written on his face, yet his mind was not as murderous as his face.

No murderous intentions, no death, rang through his mind, and he kept at it.

He cried out and ran at the teen, who ran over as well, sword in hand. Weapons clashed, sparks were sent flying, and the combatants glared at each other with hateful glances, before lashing out again.

Surprisingly, Zealot could handle himself fine without his other arm, and fended off just fine.

Zeros lashed out at Zealot's head, but the teen ducked under the blow, and lashed out at Zeros' legs, but he managed to block. Zeros slashed upward, but Zealot jumped back to avoid it.

Zealot slashed downward, but Zeros jumped aside, and blocked the sideways slash aimed at his torso. Zeros scoffed and swung out at Zealot again, but the teen managed to flip away easily.

Metal clashed wildly, and Zeros managed to get a few minor hits in, while Zealot got some bigger cuts through Zeros' defenses. Zeros winced as he received another slash across his axe arm, making blood flow down his arm. Zeros growled in anger and jumped aside.

Furious red flames suddenly encircled Zeros' hand, which he then flung at Zealot. The fiery blast was enough to throw Zealot off guard, and the orb hit him square in the chest, eating away at his clothes and skin. The flames lasted only a moment, and had succeeded in knocking Zealot to the ground, his scarred chest exposed. Zealot grunted and sat up clumsily, seeing as he had only one arm left to work with.

Erica gasped when she saw the scars, shocked to see so many of them. While at the same time, she admired his good physique, before shaking her head violently.

'The Hell am I thinking?! Bad thoughts! Bad thoughts!' she thought, hoping to get it from her mind.

Onyx looked at Erica and said: "There's nothing wrong with it at all, if you feel that way," before turning back to the fight.

Erica looked at the girl in shock, until she realized.

'Oh great! She's a Jupiter Adept!'

The wound on his chest burned violently, but Zealot had no way of soothing it at the moment. The fight was becoming too violent itself to be able to cast Psynergy. Weapons continued to clash wildly, and Zealot was starting to grow weary.

His arm was slowly losing strength, and the wounds only made it worse. His arm burned with intense pain, and it became hard to move the limb.

After awhile, Zealot decided that he really needed to do something to heal himself, so he did the only thing he could. He ducked under Zeros' swing, and threw himself at the man with his shoulder, sending him a few feet away. Zealot immediately jumped back for some extra space, wincing at the evident pain in his shoulder.

However, Zeros recovered faster than Zealot would've liked, as he jumped up and shook his head to clear the cobwebs. Purple energy gathered as Zeros' weapon released what sounded like a furious howl. The energy then shot at the purple pommelstone of his weapon. Everything was soon shrouded in a purple hue, and Zeros grasped the weapon tightly in his clutches.

"That's not good!!!" Rander exclaimed in horror.

Onyx shook her head and whimpered: "Zealot's done for!"

Sara looked at them in confusion and asked: "Why? What's wrong?"

Rander simply nodded at the fight, and said: "Watch."

"REIGN OF JUPITER!!!!" Zeros screamed on top of his lungs, aimed his axe at Zealot, and released the energy.

The blast of purple plasma was sent through the air straight at the unsuspecting teen. Before Zealot could even register what was happening, the plasma hit him head-on, sending him away.

As well as out of ring.

Zeros placed his axe away as his eyes returned to sapphire blue, and calmly walked over to the downed teen. The boy was down for the count, and didn't seem to be able to get up soon.

"Shine, give me a hand here," Zeros murmured, and the Saturn Djinni poked its head out.

"Okidokie!" Shine said enthusiastically.

He leaped out and vanished in a trail of white sparks.

The sparks touched Zealot, and spread across his entire body, healing wounds, including his snapped arm and broken ribs, and he fixed his clothes as well. Once Shine had done his job, he found his way back into Zeros's pouch.

Zealot groggily opened his eyes, and was a little surprised to see Zeros looking down at him.

"Nice battle out there," Zeros said with a smile, and held out his hand to Zealot.

The boy hesitated, but Zeros seemed to have no more intention to fight, so he reached up and managed to grab a hold of Zeros' hand. Zeros easily pulled the boy to his feet, without much trouble at all.

But, Zealot could tell instantly, there was something wrong with his hand. It was like Zeros' hands were somehow, different, from what they were supposed to be. Zeros released Zealot's hand once he was back to his feet, gave the teen a nod, and left the ring.

Zealot waited for a moment, not quite understanding Zeros' motives, before pulling his hood over his head, and leaving to get Canyon, and then left the ring as well.

Compared to the battle with Zealot and Zeros, the battle between Rander and Brett was a quick one. Brett came out as the victor, but Rander didn't quite bother with it. Rander had been more experienced, but Brett had proven himself to be more ingenious. Now Brett only had one more worry on his mind.

Brett looked over at Zeros, who stood by the window, gazing out at the setting sun. Zealot had staid to watch the battle, unlike Ray, who had left right after he was beaten.

Zeros was deadly calm, and probably mentally preparing for the upcoming battle. Unlike others, Zeros never underestimated his enemies, like Brett had seen with so many. Brett also knew he'd have his hands full with Zeros if he managed to beat Zealot like it was hardly anything.

Eve watched Zeros as well and asked: "What kind of Adept is that guy?"

Brett shrugged his shoulders, not knowing what else to say or do.

Zeros was all but preparing for the battle ahead. Painful memories had resurfaced when Zealot had thrown that electric blast at him, memories he had spent years on trying to forget. Now they had resurfaced and were haunting him once again.

Grey eyes sparking with utmost fury, black hair that seemed too smooth to be natural. Those eyes were the worst, because all that fury had been aimed his way, which made the pain that always followed worse. It burned, it always did, and in the end, he was always left alone, naked and bleeding.

He mentally shook his head, trying desperately to banish the thoughts. No use though. Once those memories were back, it was almost impossible to get rid off them. It would take at least a few hours to get them out of his head. But time was something he didn't have here.

'Just great! Just perfect!'

Against his will, his mind reeled backwards, back to *that* day.

"Katana, this kid will stay with us for awhile, do you mind?"

"Not at all! Kai could really use a friend!"

"Who's Kai??"

"Kai's our son. Hang on a second. KAI!! GET DOWN HERE!!!"

"YES FATHER!!!"

"Kai, this is Zeros. Zeros, this is our son, Kai."

"Like, WHATEVER!!"

"Kai! Behave yourself and say hi!"

"Ugh! Yes mother! Hellohowdoyoudo?"

"Huh??"

"Listen up, punk! I have no use for friends, so, if you want to stay on my good side, STAY AWAY FROM ME! UNDERSTOOD?!"

"Y-y-y-yes sir."

"Good! Now GET MOVING!!"

"AI!!"

"Kai, I don't want you threatening Zeros again! Is that understood?!"

"Yes, mother. I'm sorry, mother."

"Don't apologize to me! Apologize to Zeros! NOW!!"

"Fine. Sorry Zeros."

"Why are you doing this?!"

"Because I can do whatever I want!"

"OW! Stop it already! You're hurting me!"

*"I don't listen to anybody! Especially to you!! You filthy
BITCH!!!"*

"AYA!!"

Zeros winced as he remembered the pain of his fist connecting to his temple. It had hurt, like hell. And he hadn't stopped there. Oh no, he sure as Hell hadn't.

Every punch and kick had roughly connected with his still sensitive skin, bruising him up beyond recognition. But the worst wounds he'd ever gotten were the whip lashes on his back, and even the cutting of his flesh by the guy's sword.

All scars were safely hidden, but it still hurt to look at them, because every time he was reminded of what that guy did to him.

He heard people scream from outside, and the announcer finally called out what he had feared.

The final round was ready to begin.

Oh my God!! I actually broke my own record!!! Longest fighting I ever wrote was less than three pages. This one's over four! WHOHOO!!

Ahem. Anyway, final round!

ZEROS VS. BRETT